

# Horizons

## SHTM Magazine

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

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### 10 Years@ SHTM New Home



- ✦ Defining an Era: The Last 10 Years
- ✦ Celebrating a Decade of Hotel ICON
- ✦ SHTM Tops World Rankings Again
- ✦ Smart Tourism Conference Organised by Students

Opening Minds • Shaping the Future



# 10 YEARS OF ICONIC MOMENTS

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## Defining an Era

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## DEAN'S MESSAGE

Green shoots of hope are emerging for our formidable industry, bowed but mercifully unbroken by the pandemic. Now is the time to come together to build a better future for hospitality and tourism. World travel may have been brought to a standstill, but the SHTM is committed to driving recovery through partnerships that defy borders.

What better example than the synergy showcased in this issue's cover story? Ten years ago, the landscape of hospitality and tourism education changed forever when the SHTM joined hands with Hotel ICON. Faculty, students, and stakeholders reflect on the School's extraordinary achievements in the last decade and look forward to an even brighter future.

Next, we throw open the doors to Hotel ICON itself – the jewel in the crown of the SHTM's world-leading approach to education and research. In the 10 years since its opening, the hotel has helped to nurture a generation of world-class hoteliers and spearheaded change through state-of-the-art research and sustainability initiatives.

The training provided by the SHTM and Hotel ICON equips students to excel – even in challenging times. At the 26th PolyU Congregation (SHTM) in March, a fresh cohort of graduates readied themselves to help rebuild the industry. In May, a group of talented undergraduates planned and organised the Smart Tourism in the Greater Bay Area Forum, bringing international stakeholders together to envisage a smarter and more sustainable future for the region's tourism.

Clearly, mapping the future requires teamwork. In May, the SHTM and PATA published their seventh Asia Pacific Visitor Forecasts report. Hope is on the horizon, the report suggests, but agility and flexibility will be crucial. These are certainly hallmarks of the School's industry-focused endeavours, from SHTM+ICON Consultancy to its Executive Development Programmes.

Partnership is also the theme of stories on the School's Mentorship Programme and MSc offering. The School's top-tier education offers a launchpad for career success, according to MSc students, fresh graduates, and Outstanding Alumni. Another longstanding international relationship was deepened this year when the School welcomed students from Japan's Kansai Gaidai University to its MicroMasters programme.

Alongside ground-breaking faculty research and School news, the issue describes the year's vibrant calendar of F&B events – which had a strikingly international flavour. This perfectly reflects the SHTM's emphasis on togetherness in everything it does, from its pioneering decade-long partnership with Hotel ICON to a whirlwind online tour of global cuisines. Only by standing firm together can we rebuild, and reinvent our crisis-stricken industry. **H**



Professor Kaye Chon

Dean and Chair Professor

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



## A New Chapter

*“Welcome to our new School!”*

Ten years ago, these words ushered in a brand new chapter in the history of the SHTM. On a chilly winter's morning in 2011, the doors to the School's premises in Tsim Sha Tsui East opened to students for the first time.

Ready to greet them was Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean and Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management. “I stayed outside for two and a half hours”, recalls Dean Chon, “welcoming every student into the building”.

One of these students was Mr Calvin Yuen, now HQ Food & Beverage Manager at the Shangri-La Group. “I felt proud and honoured to be amongst the first to

experience the new SHTM campus”, says Mr Yuen. “The warm welcome from Dean Chon and the team is a lasting memory – a true example of hospitality at its finest”.

In 2011, the move to Tsim Sha Tsui East made history by bringing the School under the same roof as Hotel ICON – the world's first seamlessly integrated teaching and research hotel. More world firsts were on the horizon. A three-time recipient of I-CHRIE's McCool Breakthrough Award for its pioneering approach to hospitality and tourism education, the SHTM is also the world's leading institution of its kind. In 2021, it topped ShanghaiRanking's list of the world's top 100 universities in the “Hospitality and Tourism Management” category for the fifth year in a row.

These extraordinary achievements are summed up perfectly by Ms Betty Simpson, General Manager of Helena May, recipient of the Outstanding Alumni Award, and current Vice Chairman of the SHTM Alumni

Association. "Hotel ICON has made the SHTM a force to be reckoned with", she notes, describing the School's dizzying rise "from its humble beginning as a diploma-conferring department to one of the world's best recognised hotel management and tourism schools".

## *A Launch Pad for Dreams*

The SHTM is dedicated to nurturing passionate, pioneering hospitality professionals to lead the industry and serve the global community. Hotel ICON is at the heart of this mission, according to another Outstanding Alumna, Ms Sylvia Chung, who also served as Management and Operations

"I cannot imagine anything more valuable than studying within a hotel setting", agrees Mr Yuen, who received his BSc in Hotel Management in 2012. "Learning hospitality is a hands-on experience".

The last decade has seen a generation of talented students hone their practical skills in the SHTM's world-class facilities, from serving real guests in Bistro 1979 to wine appreciation in the Vinoteca Lab and mastering the latest technologies in the expanded Samsung Digital Lab for Hospitality Technology.

Unsurprisingly, the School's graduates are highly sought after in the competitive world of hospitality and tourism. "I was a step ahead of most of my peers in terms of knowledge and experience",

teaching and training complex for future pillars of the industry", says Mr Lau. Dean Chon could not agree more. "Our vision is to see our students rise to become leaders of the hospitality and tourism industry, not only in Hong Kong or mainland China, but also in New York, London and beyond".

## *A Shining Light*

In 2011, pursuing a "vision unlike any other", the SHTM moved to the premises that remain its home today. In the last 10 years, it has redefined the paradigm of hospitality education and set new standards for serving the industry through innovative research and international collaboration. "A great advantage of the SHTM", notes Dr Jennifer Cronin, President of Wharf Hotels and Chair of the SHTM Industry Advisory Committee, "is its industry partnerships, networks and connections".

Never has the industry been in greater need of the School's support than today. "We must lead with fierce honesty", urges Dr Cronin, "while providing realistic hope for the future". The SHTM is perfectly placed to do so. In the words of Mr Steve Rushmore, President and CEO of HVS and Chair of the School Advisory Committee, it nurtures "the right skills, mindset and vision to lead our industry out of crisis".

In the last decade, the SHTM has achieved more than we could ever have imagined. What will the next 10 years look like for this world-class institution? For Mr Rushmore, the answer is clear. "Rather than waiting to see what the future holds, the SHTM will be right there leading the way". **H**

recalls BSc graduate Mr Stephen Tai. Mr Tai was a beneficiary of the SHTM's Elite Management Training Programme, launched a year after the opening of the new premises, and now serves as Talent & Culture Manager, Rosewood Hotel Group.

Another ambassador for the SHTM's unique brand of innovation and application is Outstanding Alumnus and hotel entrepreneur Mr David Lau, Founder and CEO of Ocean Sky Hotel Management Ltd. "The SHTM is the perfect

Planning Consultant for the hotel. "Guests feel the passion and energy whenever they step onto the premises", observes Ms Chung, who is now Deputy Managing Director for Nina Hospitality.

For BSc graduate Ms Cici Tam, who now manages Hong Kong's first ever Le Cordon Bleu programme, interning at this "hotel with a purpose" was a dream come true. "I was exposed to a lot of learning opportunities", she recalls, "which ignited my passion for the industry".



SHTM staff members at Welcoming Day 2021

# JEWEL IN THE CROWN



While sipping cocktails in Hotel ICON's rooftop bar or admiring the lobby's breath-taking vertical garden, it's easy to forget that this is a "hotel with a purpose" beyond customer satisfaction. As seamless as the service is the integration of this full-service hotel with the world's foremost institute for hospitality and tourism education. Hotel ICON is the gleaming jewel in the SHTM's crown.

The story of this ground-breaking partnership began 10 years ago, soon after the School's move to its current premises in Tsim Sha Tsui East. At the hotel's official opening on 21 September 2011, industry leaders, alumni, and other friends of the SHTM celebrated the School's "Vision Unlike Any Other". "This is a new stage in our pursuit of excellence", vowed Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management.

Through its partnership with the SHTM, Hotel ICON has not only delivered on this promise but exceeded expectations, winning numerous awards along the way. "The hotel has achieved outstanding commercial success", notes Dr Victor Lo, Chairman of the Board, "while preparing a new generation of Hong Kong hotel leaders".

By rotating through different roles and departments, student interns learn exactly how a high-end hotel operates – from serving guests to interpreting real financial figures. "We make sure everything that they learn is genuine and realistic", explains Mr Richard Hatter, General Manager of Hotel ICON and SHTM Adjunct Associate Professor, whose creative vision has long shaped the hotel's philosophy.

"Hotel ICON has also enhanced the SHTM's leadership role in hospitality research for the advancement of the industry," adds Mr Hatter. This includes "Tomorrow's Guestrooms", a

platform for exploring state-of-the-art hotel technologies and business concepts. In 2018, the School added a new dimension to its partnership with Hotel ICON by establishing the industry-focused SHTM+ICON Consultancy.

"The world has taken notice of Hotel ICON's reputation", says Mr Hatter, "and watched with both excitement and envy as its star has risen". In the wake of COVID-19, the world now looks to the SHTM and Hotel ICON to rebuild hospitality and tourism, a pillar of the global economy. "Together", adds Dr Lo, "the two entities will continue to focus on sustainable operations through innovation to create value for guests, the community, and the planet".

As anyone who has visited Hotel ICON will attest, the best hotels are built on more than just concrete and steel. Their foundations are far stronger – teamwork, passion, and exemplary service for the benefit of all. **H**

# SHTM Leads the World Again

This year, the SHTM was recognised as the best in the world by not one but two globally respected institutions. For the fifth consecutive year, it claimed the top spot in the "Hospitality and Tourism Management" category of ShanghaiRanking's Global Ranking of Academic Subjects. This annual ranking is one of the three most influential measures of university performance, alongside the QS World University Rankings and Times Higher Education World University Rankings.

Cause for more celebration came with the release of the 2020–21 University Ranking by Academic Performance (URAP), an international measure developed by the Informatics Institute of the Middle East Technical University. In a ringing endorsement of its visionary educational approach, the SHTM placed first in the world in URAP's "Commerce, Management, Tourism and Service" category for the fourth year in a row.

These rankings are truly an "impressive achievement", in the words of Professor Jin-Guang Teng, PolyU President, who extended his congratulations to the School's visionary leader, Professor Kaye Chon, Dean and Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management. Warmly echoing Professor Teng, Mr Steve Rushmore, Chairman of the School Advisory Committee, stressed the sheer scale of the School's success. "This is an outstanding achievement when you

realise how many hotel programmes there are in the world!" he said. "I am so proud to be associated with the SHTM!"

A similar sentiment was expressed by Dr Jennifer Cronin, Chairman of the SHTM Industry Advisory Committee. "Hong Kong should be proud of these number one global rankings!", she said. They are a tribute to the School's dedicated faculty, its trail-blazing graduates, and its culture of academic and research excellence. For more than four decades, the SHTM has spearheaded hospitality and tourism education for the benefit of the industry – a key driver of economic and social growth. In the last 10 years, it has taken these achievements to ever greater heights through its partnership with Hotel ICON.

However, the School is fully aware that with great acclaim comes great responsibility. The world now looks to the SHTM, as the leading institution of its kind, to guide the hospitality and tourism industry out of crisis. Having nurtured generations of talented professionals and forged industry partnerships that stretch across the globe, the School is perfectly placed to rise to this challenge. With recovery on the horizon, a bright future awaits.

In the words of Dr Cronin, "Thank you for the good news, Dean Chon, and congratulations to the SHTM family!" **H**



(right) Ms Sarah Cheung leading the procession

(right) Mr David Lau

Mr Donald Choi



Ms Maria Pia Morey Poma

(left) Dr Serene Tse

Mr Gerald Chen

Rarely has the hospitality and tourism industry been in greater need of the SHTM's pioneering, passionate graduates. By tackling the challenges of post-pandemic recovery head on, we can make the hospitality and tourism industry stronger than ever before. At the 26th PolyU Congregation (SHTM) on 27 March, our graduating students were reminded of their instrumental role as future leaders in driving this development – in Hong Kong and beyond.

The virtual graduation ceremony honoured the class of 2020, which comprised 12 Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), 29 Doctor of Hotel and Tourism Management (D.HTM), 169 Master of Science (MSc), 1 Postgraduate Diploma (PgD), and

253 Bachelor of Science (BSc) graduates.

## Emerging Ever Stronger

Opening the ceremony, Professor Jin-Guang Teng, President of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, encouraged his audience to set clear goals, embrace opportunities, and "glow with brilliance in a world full of uncertainties". In the spirit of resilience, President

Teng also stressed that graduates have the power to move forward in meaningful directions. "Upon graduation you will have much greater freedom to determine your own destiny, no matter what course you now decide to take", he told them.

Next to congratulate these future leaders of the industry was Mr Donald Choi, Executive Director and Group Chief Executive Officer of Chinachem Group. Whilst this may be a "bittersweet" time to begin a career in hospitality management, Mr Choi reassured his audience that the tourism industry will "rebound" in the months ahead. The most challenging of times can inspire forward-thinking ideas. Mr Choi's own company is using AI-powered

robots to minimise interactions between hotel staff and guests who are quarantining.

Another urgent priority for the hospitality and tourism industry, said Mr Choi, is sustainability. Reduced carbon emissions are “an unexpected positive outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic”, and Mr Choi urged the School’s graduates to seek other ways of making the industry safer and greener. “The world of tomorrow will belong to change-makers”, he said. “Be bold, be ambitious, believe in the importance of your work”.

## United We Stand

Following the presentation of awards, a valedictory speech was delivered by Ms Mária Pía Morey Poma, who graduated with distinction from the MSc in International Tourism and Convention Management (ITCM) this year. As graduate representative, she spoke on behalf of her classmates when she praised the industry for standing firm during the pandemic. “We saw hotels offering free accommodation to healthcare workers, restaurants serving free meals to people in need. The world recognised our industry as vital for the economy

and community”. She implored her audience to “remember that together, we are stronger”.

Continuing this theme was undergraduate representative Mr Chen Cheuk Chun, Gerald, fresh from the BSc in Hotel Management. “Our education taught us how to take care of our guests”, he said in his valedictory speech. “Perhaps it is now time for us to learn to take care of each other as we take on the challenges ahead”. Mr Chen was then presented with the SHTM Student of the Year Award 2019/20.

Other highlights included the Best D.HTM Thesis Award 2019/20, which went to Dr Feng Xiaohong for a study of child tourists as consumers. An insightful study of tourist stereotypes won Dr Tse Wai Tsz, Serene the Best Ph.D. Thesis Award 2019/20. The Best MSc Dissertation Award 2019/20 was received by ITCM graduate Miss Yang Yihan. The Best Undergraduate Honours Thesis Award 2019/20 went to Miss Ahn Seo Won, a graduate of the BSc in Hotel Management.

## Moving Forward, Together

The Outstanding PolyU SHTM Alumni Award 2020 was presented to Mr David Lau, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Ocean Sky Hotel Management Limited. Despite the turbulence of the last two years, Mr Lau’s business is growing faster than ever. After all, he explained, “where there is risk there is opportunity”. Encouraging graduates to use their “strengths and creativity” to overcome challenges, Mr Lau acknowledged the support and encouragement he had received from the SHTM and his classmates, which he described as “some of my greatest rewards”.

Closing the ceremony was Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management. In a powerful affirmation of hope and optimism, Dean Chon ended his speech by quoting Eleanor Roosevelt: “The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams”.

As the world opens up again, these dreams need not be limited to Hong Kong. Whether these talented graduates choose to ride the “wave of Asian hospitality” or travel farther afield, they will be welcomed with open arms. The SHTM hopes that they will continue to support each other in their careers ahead. It could not be more proud of the class of 2020. **H**



## Big Data, AI and Ecosystem



## A Knowledge Nexus

The SHTM is very proud to have hosted the Smart Tourism in the Greater Bay Area Forum (the Forum), which took place on 21 May. Organised by the SHTM’s Hospitality and Tourism Research Centre in collaboration with Sun Yat-Sen University’s School of Tourism Management and the Macao Institute for Tourism Studies, the Forum was held both offline, at the School, and online. It was planned and managed entirely by a talented group of SHTM undergraduate students from the Special Events Class.

Themed “Big Data, AI and Ecosystem”, the Forum centred on the exchange of tourism and technology knowledge throughout the Greater Bay Area (GBA). “Collaborative, interdisciplinary research is key”, stressed Professor Jin-Guang Teng, President of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, in his welcoming remarks. As

the world’s largest urban area, the GBA has huge potential as a technology, transportation, and finance hub, noted Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management, in his opening speech.

The first session, “Knowledge Sharing Keynotes – Academic Perspectives”, was chaired by Professor Haiyan Song, SHTM Associate Dean, Chair Professor and Mr and Mrs Chan Chak Fu Professor in International Tourism. The GBA initiative brings together “a greater catchment area, more infrastructure and more technology”, said Professor Dimitrios Buhalis, Director of the eTourism Research Lab at the International Centre for Tourism and Hospitality Research, Bournemouth University.

“Design thinking” could boost innovation in the GBA, said Professor Sangwon Park of the College of Hotel and Tourism Management, Kyung Hee University. Using this concept, Professor Park has developed a system that uses car navigation data to generate tourist recommendations on Jeju Island.

## Big Data Ambitions

The “Knowledge Sharing Keynotes – Industry Insights” session was chaired by Dr Fanny Vong, President of the Macao Institute for Tourism Studies. Ideally, smart tourism should create a “win-win-win situation” for travellers,

businesses, and the government, said Dr Jason Ni, Executive Director, Wynn Palace, Macao.

To adapt, we must understand post-pandemic trends, added Dr Yuzhou Huang, General Manager, Strategy and Development Department, Fliggy Travel.

Smart services should also “achieve real interactions” with tourists, said Dr Shanshan Qi, Invited Assistant Professor, Macao Institute for Tourism Studies. Using AI and big data may also ensure that “staff and stakeholders are heard”, said Mr Vallois Choi, Director of Digital Marketing Strategy, Hotel ICON.

Centre, Macao Institute for Tourism Studies.

When searching for meaning in such data, trust should not be overlooked, warned Ms Haena Kim, Director of Education, WildChina. “AI can open our eyes to travel possibilities, but overcoming this trust factor is what makes people book”, she explained. Professor Anthony Wong of the School of Tourism Management, Sun Yat-Sen University also suggested “combining big data with traditional research”, such as case studies.

Another strategy is to repeatedly examine data, said Mr Steve Hood, STR’s Senior Vice President of Research and Founding Director of the SHARE Centre. This “war-room mentality” helps to identify “real-time” post-COVID-19 behaviours, such as the increase in last-minute getaways.

The Forum’s daughter event, the GBA Smart Tourism Strategies Youth Challenge, was held on 22 May 2021. To promote collaboration and knowledge exchange among young people in the region, undergraduate students from Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macau were invited to develop a Smart Tourism Development Strategy Plan for the GBA. The PolyU team was the second runner up.

The School thanks the student organisers and participants for these rewarding two days. It is eager to see what will emerge from these fruitful exchanges – both within the GBA and beyond. **H**

“COVID-19 has catalysed changes in consumer demand, traffic sources and the merchant”, he said. Such changes include a shift “from people looking for information to information looking for people” and an increase in livestreaming, said Mr Joseph Wang, Chief Commercial Officer, TravelDaily China.

These insights were followed by a lively panel discussion, “Smart GBA Tourism – Big Data Application in GBA”, chaired by Dr Dan Wang, SHTM Associate Professor. It is vital to identify regional needs and determine what kinds of cities are best suited to smart tourism, said Dr Yi Liu, Associate Professor, School of Tourism Management, Sun Yat-Sen University. For example, capturing travellers’ movement patterns using cell phone data “could inform regional tourism planning”, said Dr Yang Xu, Assistant Professor, Department of Land Surveying and Geo-Informatics, PolyU.

COVID-19 has affected tourism differently across countries, with some hit harder than others. Applying massive datasets to players “with different needs, systems and interactions” is challenging, said Professor Honggang Xu, Dean of the School of Tourism Management at Sun Yat-Sen University, chair of session two, “Smart GBA Tourism – Developing Smart Ecosystem”. “Our job isn’t to swim in data, but to abstract consequential principles”, said Professor Leonardo Anthony Najarro Dioko, Director, Tourism Research

## Resilience Post- COVID-19



COVID brings travel to a standstill, causing massive job and revenue losses. Will there be light at the end of the tunnel? China has given the answer!



# Mapping the Future

The SHTM is again at the forefront of targeted research to inform the hospitality and tourism industry. Its expertise has never been more in demand than it is today, as the industry reels from the blow of COVID-19.

In 2021, the SHTM’s Tourism Forecasting Unit joined forces with the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) to publish the seventh in their series of Asia Pacific Visitor Forecasts reports. The report for 2021–2023 provides the region’s travel and tourism sector, hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, with much-needed projections of tourist numbers in the coming years.

The SHTM prides itself on its forecasting expertise. The members of its Tourism Forecasting Unit publish world-leading research and provide consultancy services for tourism organisations worldwide. “We are

delighted to be part of the PATA forecasting initiative, as transferring our knowledge to practice is high on the School’s research agenda”, notes Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean and Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management, in his foreword to the report.

A key member of the authorial team this year was the SHTM’s Professor Haiyan Song, SHTM Associate Dean and Chair Professor and Mr and Mrs Chan Chak Fu Professor in International Tourism. Along with colleagues from other institutions, the team included research associate Mr Xinyang Liu and research associate Ms Sherry Dubing Mi from the SHTM.

## Better Data, Better Measures

Most tourism destinations have suffered massive reductions in visitors and revenue due to the pandemic, and the Asia Pacific region is no exception. There is no doubt that challenging times lie ahead. But what exactly can the industry expect in the months and years to come? "As international travel and tourism returns to some semblance of growth, it is likely to look very different in shape, form and volume", notes Dr Mario Hardy, PATA CEO, in his foreword to the report.

This may not necessarily be a bad thing. Although COVID-19 has come close to crushing hospitality

This is exactly what the SHTM's Tourism Forecasting Unit and PATA sought to provide. They worked with national tourism offices and statistical agencies across the Asia Pacific region, which generously made their data freely available. The results of their analysis will help businesses, destinations, and governments anticipate change and react swiftly and appropriately. The Tourism Forecasting Unit will also assist PATA in disseminating updates to the report, ensuring that the latest data can be incorporated into future strategies.

## Road to Recovery

The team modelled and predicted visitor arrivals to 39 Asia

"and some of the inherent risks associated with them need to be factored into these projections of visitor arrivals".

From 2000 until the pandemic hit at the end of 2019, the Asia Pacific region enjoyed a tourism boom. The effect of the COVID-19 outbreak was devastating, with an 83% decline in visitor numbers in the region's most popular destinations. Recovery will depend on both the containment of COVID-19 and global economic growth, which will create the conditions necessary for tourism to pick up.

However, hope may be on the horizon. The report highlights that domestic travel in the region has partly filled the void left by the slump in international tourism. Even better, the team's projections across all scenarios suggest that a bounce back is imminent. For example, although Northeast Asia was the hardest hit by travel restrictions during the pandemic, it is likely to enjoy the region's largest share of foreign visitors by the end of 2021. Interestingly, islands and more isolated destinations are expected to recover more quickly than the rest of the region, probably because they are better able to contain the virus.

Travellers' confidence and certainty in the industry need to be restored, and the road to recovery for business and destinations may be long. However, the robust and considered research done by the SHTM and PATA reveals that there is light at the end of the tunnel. In short, their analyses offer informed optimism. Recovery is possible, and although the new landscape of tourism will be very different, the challenges can be faced with agility and flexibility. **H**



Professor  
Haiyan Song

and tourism, in its wake we may find opportunities to build a safer, more sustainable, and more resilient industry. "To achieve this", says Dr Hardy, "we really need better measurements and metrics, especially those that focus on what really matters". We also need better and more timely data to respond swiftly to future risks and threats.

Pacific destinations and combined them in an integrated framework to suggest key recovery trends for 2021 to 2023. In the report, they present three possible scenarios for every destination, describing mild, medium and severe effects of the pandemic. "There are still many unknowns affecting the global marketplace", explains Dr Hardy,

# A New Era of Tourism

It is now a decade since the establishment of Hotel ICON, the SHTM's teaching and research hotel, and another productive and exciting year has passed for the pair's most recent venture, SHTM+ICON Consultancy. With an eye firmly on the recovery of tourism post-COVID-19, the Consultancy has redoubled its efforts to engineer knowledge transfer to the industry. This year, it has set new standards for tourism development and education through innovative projects that will benefit Hong Kong, mainland China, and beyond.

As the pandemic recedes, green shoots of recovery are emerging for the crisis-hit hospitality and tourism industry. Just as travellers are eager to explore the world again, so tourism centres hope to kickstart their recovery through powerful new marketing approaches. One

of these centres is the historic city of Dengfeng in mainland China, home to the world-famous Shaolin Temple. In 2021, SHTM+ICON Consultancy joined forces with Ningbo Nottingham University to help Dengfeng upgrade its tourism development strategy.

With their proven strengths in both local and international strategic tourism planning, the Consultancy's experts were perfectly equipped to help Dengfeng take advantage of its huge potential for tourism development. Situated in Henan province, the city is renowned for its rich cultural heritage, its ancient pagodas and temples, its longstanding martial arts tradition, and the stunning scenery of the Songshan mountains.

The team's first task was to evaluate these important

tourism resources, along with the characteristics of past visitors to Dengfeng and the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. To shed more light on Dengfeng's path to recovery, the Consultancy benchmarked the city against outstanding tourism destinations at home and overseas, such as the historic Tuscan city of Florence and China's spectacular Huangshan Mountains.

Armed with these insights, the experts presented Dengfeng's Culture and Tourism Bureau with a vision of and mission for the city's future tourism development. They identified eight key tourism products for development, ranging from a Buddhist temple immersion programme to evening activities and wellness/health tourism, and suggested corresponding marketing strategies.



With such a clear strategy for tourism development, Dengfeng is sure to welcome hosts of visitors as soon as travel restrictions are lifted. The SHTM is proud to have leveraged its research prowess and Hotel ICON's practical knowhow to support this remarkable city in its time of need.

Closer to home, the team has recently also been commissioned to consult on redeveloping the accommodation and recreational facilities of The Sailors Home and Mission to Seamen in Hong Kong.

## *From Local to Global*

This year, the SHTM also joined hands with the China Outbound

Chinese market for hospitality and tourism professionals worldwide. It can be accessed online at any time, anywhere, and using any device.

A new wave of Chinese tourists is expected to flow into international destinations in the coming year, making up for the "lost year" of 2020. Their needs and preferences will undoubtedly have changed post-COVID-19, and the industry must respond accordingly. The combined reach, expertise, and access to data of the SHTM and COTRI will ensure that those who take the CTT courses enjoy the very latest information on tourism trends. Understanding China's outbound tourism market will help businesses, destinations, and governments to leverage the huge numbers of Chinese tourists ready to travel abroad again.

For ease of use, the CTT programme is divided into five "tracks", namely hospitality,

cost. Participants also benefit from 24/7 access to a discussion forum for communication and networking.

Already, more than 50 participants from across the world have completed the programme, earning verified university certificates that will inspire confidence and trust internationally. Those who receive this accreditation can also apply for membership of the prestigious SHTM Alumni Association.

With their far-reaching implications for the recovery of global tourism, these important industry-focused initiatives testify to the expertise, dedication, and creativity of SHTM+ICON Consultancy and its international partners. **H**

# SHTM+ICON

## Defining the Future

Tourism Research Institute (COTRI), the world's leading research institute for Chinese outbound tourism, to develop the innovative online China Tourism Training (CTT) programme. This programme is designed to provide up-to-date, accurate, and in-depth practical guidance on various aspects of the

destinations, retail, attractions, and transportation, each of which is further divided into "chapters" and "sub-chapters". The content is based on solid data drawn from a wide range of high-level industry sources. COVID-19 updates for many countries and regions are included in each track at no extra



# Nurturing the Industry's Finest



Mr Pierandrea Falchi



Ms Jennifer Klar



Mr David Lau



Ms Kristina Park



Ms Natasha  
Piedrahita



Mr Kyu Baek Kim



Ms Alice Kondja



Ms Mária Pía Morey  
Poma



Ms Zixi Peng



Mr Peihao Wang

To develop advanced skills in hospitality, professionals need to be where the action is. Asia, the world's fastest growing market for tourism, is poised to revive and reimagine its once-booming industry in the wake of COVID-19. Based in Hong Kong, the beating heart of Asian tourism, the SHTM is ideally placed to support talented, ambitious industry professionals.

Its four cutting-edge Master of Science (MSc) programmes – globally minded, but with an Asian

twist – offer a stepping stone to the highest tiers of the hospitality and tourism profession. We invited talented MSc students, fresh graduates, and alumni to explain how the SHTM has fast-tracked their career development, and they were very happy to oblige.

In an increasingly connected world, the SHTM is dedicated to embracing diversity. This is exactly what attracted Ms Natasha Piedrahita to the MSc in Global Hospitality Business (MGH), which

won the McCool Breakthrough Award for its cross-cultural, continent-spanning approach. "The setting in three prestigious academic institutions and tourism markets", said Ms Piedrahita, "exposes us to global industry insights and teaches us to adapt strategies, behaviours and services to local markets".

For her fellow MGH student Mr Pierandrea Falchi, who comes from Italy, the chance to spend a semester each in Hong Kong,

Switzerland, and the US was unmissable. “The programme provides tools for doing business in Asia, Europe, and the Americas”, he explained. “Experiencing different cultures through academia and classmates who are professionals in their fields is a massive advantage”.

The value of learning with and from fellow professionals was also stressed by Ms Mária Pía Morey Poma, who graduated from the MSc in International Tourism and Convention Management (ITCM) in 2020. In her valedictory speech at the 26th PolyU Congregation (SHTM), she praised her classmates for their passion, resilience, and selflessness. “To join the SHTM is to join an elite group”, she added. “Excellence is required, but it opens the doors to the world”.

## Springboard to Success

The SHTM’s MSc students and fresh graduates can look forward to a bright future, judging from the success stories of alumni.

MGH students can take inspiration from alumnus Mr Kyu Baek Kim, who graduated in 2016 and now serves as Head of Acquisition & Development for Ovolo Group, seeking new growth opportunities for this rapidly expanding boutique hospitality company. “The global nature of the MGH, the classes I took, and the connections I made were incredibly helpful in expanding my perspectives”, Mr Kim told us.

Gaining a global vision was also a highlight of the MGH programme for 2017 graduate Ms Jennifer Klar, Corporate Sustainability Manager for Six Senses Hotels Resorts Spas. “I developed my interpersonal skills,” she recalled, “and became better

at working in international teams”. However, the industry must think local as well as global. With growing awareness of “carbon footprints”, says Ms Klar, “many hotels have realised the benefit of supporting local and seasonal products over imported ones”.

Such flexible thinking is a hallmark of the School’s postgraduate education. When Ms Kristina Park arrived at the SHTM, her experience of the industry lay mainly in marketing and real estate. But the MGH programme made it easy to pivot when the hospitality industry embraced digital technologies. “What we learned helps me on a daily basis”, said Ms Park, Global Social Media & Media Content Manager for Shiji Group.

Knowledge transfer was also stressed by hotel entrepreneur Mr David Lau, Chief Executive Officer of Ocean Sky Hotel Management Limited and recipient of the SHTM’s Outstanding Alumni Award 2020. Mr Lau credits the SHTM for sharpening his hospitality skills and helping him to turn knowledge into action. While pursuing his MSc in International Hospitality Management (IHM), Mr Lau opened the innovative Popway Hotel. “I have been able to apply what I learned at the SHTM in all of my hotel projects”, he said.

## Prepared for the Ph.D.

As well as launching high-flying careers, the SHTM’s MSc programmes prepare graduates for doctoral studies in tourism and hospitality.

Two recent IHM graduates, Ms Zixi Peng and Mr Peihao Wang, have received several Ph.D. offers

from prestigious US universities. Ms Peng, who has worked as a research assistant at the SHTM since graduating in 2019, will now advance her research interests at the Pennsylvania State University. “The years I spent at the SHTM were game-changing”, she said. “The programme laid a solid foundation for my future study”.

Mr Wang, who graduated this year, has received offers from the Pennsylvania State University, Purdue University, and Tempe University, which has also offered him a Presidential Fellowship. “The SHTM opened my mind and enabled me to think on a higher level,” he told us, thanking his professors for their tireless support and encouragement.

This autumn, another 2021 MSc graduate will embark on a Ph.D. at a prestigious university: the SHTM! Ms Alice Kondja, who travelled from Ghana to study ITCM, chose the School for its “high-quality education, state-of-the-art facilities, and diverse sociocultural community”. This is the perfect launchpad for Ms Kondja’s dream of becoming an internationally recognised researcher and consultant in tourism and hospitality management. **H**

# Research Horizons

## The Art of Upselling

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Online upselling is an ever more popular way for hotel companies to bring in revenue. However, it remains unclear whether online upselling complements or replaces in-person strategies such as front-desk upselling. In an important exploratory study, the SHTM’s Basak Denizci Guillet sought to answer this question. Her findings generate crucial insights for hotels in volatile and challenging times, while also providing an “upselling model for the industry that considers the complexities of today’s multifaceted ecommerce environment”.

### Customer Upgrades

Hotels can increase their revenue in various ways – most obviously by attracting new customers. However, this can be costly and time-consuming. An increasingly popular alternative is upselling, whereby existing customers are persuaded to spend more on an already agreed transaction, such as by upgrading to a superior hotel room.

Upselling helps hotels to “sell higher room categories, such as club and suite rooms, which would otherwise be empty or used for free upgrades”, says the researcher. The customer also benefits from upselling by getting a superior room at a reduced price. Upselling can take place at “any point during the customer cycle”, such as during the booking process, between booking and arrival, during check-in, or even at check-out with an offer for the next stay.

Traditionally, a hotel’s front desk staff would upsell to guests during check-in. In today’s digital era, however, more and more hotels are introducing online upselling systems. These systems send personalised upselling messages at various points in the booking cycle, give guests the opportunity to “bid for a better room”, and allow customers to select upselling options through the online portal.

However, as little research has been done on this topic, it is unclear whether online and offline upselling channels are complementary, offering customers a choice of the most convenient channel, or whether online upselling has had a negative effect on offline upselling. Dr Guillet aimed to explore this issue and also to investigate whether hotel customers’ profiles and sociodemographic backgrounds influence their likelihood of bidding for superior rooms in the upselling process.

### An Exploratory Study

A mixed methods approach, involving the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data, was chosen for the study, which the researcher described as “exploratory”. The qualitative data were collected in 2018 during 16 in-depth interviews with “hotel industry professionals familiar with online upselling”. The interviewees included revenue directors, consultants, front office managers and marketing directors working in hotels in the US, Europe and Asia.

During the interviews, the hotel professionals were asked about their online upselling systems, why and how they used them, and how the hotels benefited from them.

In the second part of the study, conducted in the same year, the researcher partnered with an independent hotel company in Hong Kong to compare online and front-desk upselling. The hotel has 262 rooms, ranging from standard rooms to suites. For online upselling, the hotel uses a system called UpsellGuru, which offers customers with a reservation “a chance to bid for one or several different room types” by moving a slider to indicate the price they are willing to pay. The hotel can then decide “whether to accept or deny the upgrade offer within 24h”.

### Characteristics of Upselling

The industry professionals who participated in the interviews identified a number of customer and hotel-related factors that influence upselling. They all agreed that only customers who book directly or through an online travel agency are contacted for upselling offers, because an email address is essential. Otherwise, the professionals did not differentiate between customer characteristics for online and offline selling.

They did, however, identify a few customer characteristics that influence whether they might be contacted for upselling. For example, it seems easiest to upsell

to customers who are staying for leisure rather than business, celebrating a special occasion, or travelling from abroad. However, as one respondent mentioned, sometimes the hotel receives more than 50 upselling bids a day. Therefore, when deciding whom to choose for upselling, it is difficult to take other factors into account apart from the potential increase in revenue.

The professionals also tended to focus on customers who booked the most basic rooms, because this makes it easier to find options for upselling, such as a larger room, a sea or harbour view, or club access with free breakfast, tea, and cocktails. Indeed, data from the second study showed that the “most popular upsells” were from a standard city view room to a standard harbour view room, and from standard city and harbour view rooms to club city and harbour view rooms.

### **Online Versus Offline Upselling**

There was a general consensus among the industry professionals that online and offline upselling “go hand in hand”, as there are advantages and disadvantages of both approaches. Front-desk upselling has the advantage of offering a larger customer base, but it is only possible to sell un-booked rooms on a single day, whereas online upselling can take place a few days before arrival. Online upselling offers greater involvement for customers because they select the price they are willing to pay rather than the hotel setting the price, as is the case with offline upselling.

The industry professionals were divided in their opinions on whether online upselling affects front-desk upselling. However, as one respondent pointed out, overall, only 30-40% of customers book directly or through an online travel agency, leaving many

customers whom “front office staff can approach for upselling during check-in”. This suggests that online upselling will not replace front-desk upselling in the near future.

The findings of the second study, in which data were collected from UpsellGuru, confirmed that online upselling was not a substitute for front-desk upselling. In terms of the revenue brought in by the two channels, revenue from online upselling was greater overall than from offline upselling, yet during several months of the study this trend was reversed. In general, upselling revenue increased considerably after the introduction of UpsellGuru, partly because the change prompted the hotel to make its front-desk offers “more attractive to customers” by making the room prices more comparable with those offered online.

Hence, online upselling has certainly not had a negative effect and both channels help to increase revenue. As the researcher explains, it is likely that “the type of customers that choose to bid for upselling” differ from those who “respond positively to front-desk upselling offers”.

### **An Omni-Channel Approach**

Of all the practical implications of the study, writes the researcher, “perhaps the most important one is the need to move away from treating each upselling channel as independent”. The two channels are complementary rather than substitutive, yet currently they “are not streamlined and aligned”. By taking a “more unified view” of customers, hotels can align their marketing efforts to maximise upselling across both online and front-desk channels. The key to achieving this “omni-channel approach to upselling” is to understand customers’ preferences better by collecting data that “go beyond the strategies hotels implement now”. An omni-

channel approach also enables an “integrated, seamless experience across multiple devices and touchpoints”.

Overall, the researcher advises hotels to continue to invest in front-desk upselling. To ensure its success she suggests that employees such as front-desk staff should be “trained on the methods and importance” of data collection, and should receive “specialised, regular training in upselling”.

### **More Questions than Answers**

This exploratory study provides an interesting overview of current upselling approaches in the hotel industry. It clearly shows that there is room for both online and offline upselling channels, as long as they are aligned and streamlined. Nevertheless, as the researcher concludes, the study “opens up more questions than it actually answers about upselling in the hospitality industry” and further research is needed to better understand how to achieve the omni-channel approach and improve data collection to “generate a single view of the customer from all distribution channels”.

#### **POINTS TO NOTE**

- Upselling is an important revenue management strategy for hotels.
- Online and offline upselling may complement or compete with each other.
- Evidence from this study suggests that they are complementary and hotels should invest in both.
- Collecting plentiful customer data is key to successful upselling.

Basak Denizci Guillet (2020). Online Upselling: Moving Beyond Offline Upselling in the Hotel Industry. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 84, 102322.

# Making Ecotechnology Worth It For Hotels

From smart room key systems to robot concierges, advanced technologies are now the norm in many hotels. In a world on the brink of climate crisis, environmental technologies should be no exception. Curiously, however, the hospitality industry is lagging behind in its adoption of eco-friendly technologies. In the first empirical study of its kind, the SHTM’s Eric Chan and two co-researchers asked what exactly is holding hoteliers back in their quest to “go green”. Their findings will prove invaluable as the industry takes its next steps towards a smarter and more sustainable future.

### **Saving the Planet**

Hotels are 24/7 operations that offer personalised services geared towards comfort and pleasure. Inevitably, this comes at a cost. Every time a guest orders room service, takes a bath, or turns on the television, more energy and water are consumed and more waste is generated. No guest wants to find a half-used bar of soap or unwashed linen upon arrival – and these days many customers demand and expect the very latest amenities, from ultrafast WiFi to power showers.

How can hotels reduce their consumption and waste without compromising customers’ experience? On the surface, the answer seems clear. Hotels are no stranger to using technology to improve the efficiency of their operations and attract customers, and green technologies offer a multitude of benefits. “Installing environmental technologies not only helps to protect our planet”, say the researchers, “but also improves a company’s environmental performance and reduces utilities expenses”.

Price-conscious hoteliers can save money by installing energy-saving technologies such as low-flow shower-heads, solar hot water collector systems, and decomposers that liquefy leftover food. Adopting such technologies could also align hotels with the green image that customers are increasingly willing to support. Some travellers even actively seek out environmentally responsible hotels. In a 2012 survey, TripAdvisor found that 71% of the respondents were keen to make eco-friendly choices when travelling.

Why, then, are hoteliers so slow to adopt environmental technologies? In Hong Kong, a few upscale hotels have seen their reputations improve and profits rise since installing occupancy sensors, headboard coolers, and air conditioning control, amongst other innovative solutions. However, uptake is still surprisingly low. Despite the advantages of environmental technologies, the researchers tell us, “many hotels remain hesitant”. To understand why so many hoteliers avoid or delay adopting environmental technologies, the researchers’ first task was to investigate the biggest barriers to implementation.

### **Obstacles to Progress**

For hotels, the decision to adopt environmental technologies can hinge on both external and internal factors. External barriers to installation include resistance from local governments and weather conditions that hinder the use of renewable energy. Hotels may also face internal barriers, such as physical constraints on technology installation, budget limitations, and a lack of manpower. “These barriers”, warn the researchers, “are likely to reduce the motivation of

senior hotel management to adopt the technologies unless they are essential to survival”.

Although survival is the core concern of any business, hotels differ in their definition of “essential”. A chain hotel with 400 rooms might benefit more in the long run from investing in environmental technologies than will a smaller, independent hotel that cannot afford the initial outlay. As underlined by the researchers, “higher initial capital costs negatively affect views on green construction and environmental management”.

Finally, a lack of technical knowledge can make hotels reluctant to adopt any new technologies – especially environmental ones. “Despite increasing demand for environmentally friendly products”, the researchers explain, “hotel managers may encounter difficulties in balancing good service provision with environmental performance”. For instance, installing water restrictors in shower-heads may reduce water flow and pressure.

Due to the striking lack of empirical research on hotels’ adoption of environmental technologies, the importance of these potential barriers has remained elusive – until now. “Do different types of hotels encounter the same barriers?” the researchers wondered. “Will hotels that are currently implementing a formal environmental management system encounter fewer barriers?”

### **Surveying Hotel Employees**

The next step was to learn first hand about the most important barriers to ecotechnology

adoption. The researchers sent a questionnaire to Hong Kong hotel employees likely to be involved in purchasing environmental technologies and planning their installation. The respondents ranged from general managers and finance directors to staff responsible for environmental management systems. Although many of the hotels boasted green awards, employed specialists responsible for environmental programmes, or had green committees, fewer than 30% of them planned to obtain green certification within the next year.

The questionnaire contained 22 statements describing potential barriers to the adoption of environmental technologies (e.g., “Usually, new environmental technologies are very expensive”). The hotel employees were asked to rate each of these statements from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The researchers analysed the responses of 102 employees from 74 hotels to find out which barriers to adopting environmental technologies were the most off-putting.

Top Three Barriers

At the top of the list were unfavourable environmental conditions. “Before specific environmental technologies can be adopted, implemented and maintained,” the researchers explain, “the surrounding environment, weather and orientation must be considered”. Physical environmental constraints discourage managers from adopting such technologies, especially those designed to harvest renewable energy. “For example, a lack of direct sunshine means insufficient solar energy, making solar technology unfeasible,” the authors note.

The answer may be to start with small-scale projects that yield swift and palpable benefits. “Once an environmental technology positively contributes to the

company’s financial statement”, say the researchers, “senior managers/ owners can be encouraged to support the adoption of larger scale environmental technologies that require additional manpower, time and money”.

The second major barrier was a lack of green knowledge and experience. As this barrier most strongly affected hotels with no green incentives or programmes, a logical solution is to create a formal structure to promote environmental management. As the researchers note, “an audited, well-developed environmental programme can improve hotel employees’ knowledge of environmental technologies and access to network support”.

The hotel employees surveyed were also concerned that a single contractor would monopolise after-sales service for each new environmental technology. This was the third major barrier to ecotechnology adoption. “It is risky for a hotel to rely on one service provider when the service may influence hotel guests’ experiences”, the researchers tell us. Consulting with multiple dealers on after-sales service and maintenance options would put hotels “in a better position to negotiate with dealers to achieve a win-win situation”, they suggest.

Finally, the researchers found that different types of hotels experienced these barriers differently. For example, employees at internationally branded chain hotels, which pride themselves on globally consistent service quality, were particularly concerned that adopting environmental technologies would damage guests’ experience. In such cases, the researchers note, “hotel managers could educate their customers by developing an effective green marketing plan that promotes the hotel’s green facilities, services and other green activities”.

In Hoteliers’ Hands

This study, the first of its kind, sheds light on why hotels are lagging behind in their adoption of environmental technologies. It also suggests comprehensive solutions. In reality, external barriers such as a lack of government support are largely out of hoteliers’ hands. Happily, however, internal barriers – which are the major hindrances to environmental technology adoption, according to the researchers – can be addressed head on. Starting small and gradually developing their green knowledge, for example, will help hotels to reduce their environmental footprint while also saving money. Overcoming each of the barriers identified by the researchers will enable hotels to contribute more meaningfully to environmental protection – saving the world one sensor-controlled lightbulb at a time.

POINTS TO NOTE

- “Green” technologies help to protect the environment and save businesses money, but hoteliers are often reluctant to adopt them.
- The main barriers to hotels’ adoption of ecotechnologies include environmental constraints and a lack of green knowledge.
- International/chain hotels and small independent hotels perceive different barriers to environmental technology adoption.
- To overcome barriers to ecotechnology adoption, hotels should start small, develop their green knowledge, and consult multiple after-service providers.

Eric S.W. Chan, Fevzi Okumus and Wilco Chan (2020). What Hinders Hotels’ Adoption of Environmental Technologies: A Quantitative Study. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 84, 102324.

Light at the End of the Tunnel

Tourism around the world is reeling from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and Hong Kong’s once vibrant industry is no exception. The path to recovery is unclear. In such extreme circumstances, is it even possible for tourism businesses to plan for the future? The answer is yes, say SHTM researchers Hanyuan Zhang and Haiyan Song – but only if we can predict the unpredictable. In a study offering new hope for an industry on its knees, they and two colleagues developed a pioneering method of forecasting tourism demand in times of crisis. Crisis brings opportunities as well as challenges. Thanks to this game-changing new forecasting approach, the tourism industry may even emerge from the pandemic stronger than before.

Black Swan Events

In 2020, the outbreak of COVID-19 spelled disaster for societies worldwide, leaving no industry untouched. With travel bans and lockdown measures rapidly implemented across continents, tourism received a crushing blow. In Hong Kong, COVID-19 hit an industry already weakened by recent social unrest. Within just a few months, the number of visitors arriving in the city had fallen by more than 80%. Travellers’ confidence in Hong Kong as a destination was at an all-time low.

Events like the pandemic – incredibly rare and unpredictable, with the power to change the course of world history – are known as “black swan” events. The tourism industry is no stranger to their devastating effects. “Despite its importance,” the researchers warn, “tourism is also one of the most vulnerable industries”. In

recent decades, for example, Hong Kong tourism has suffered major losses due to black swan events such as financial crises and the SARS epidemic.

Because they are so rare, black swan events are almost impossible to prepare for. Recovery is equally challenging, because what lies ahead is so unpredictable. This is a serious problem for the tourism industry, the researchers tell us, because “tourism businesses and organisations rely on recovery forecasting when preparing their crisis recovery plans”. Most importantly, they need to know how and when travellers are likely to return.

Predicting the Unpredictable

Normally, organisations facing difficulties look to the past for guidance. They use forecasts generated by traditional approaches, which are based on historical data, to inform their decisions on everything from budgeting to sales. However, old roadmaps are of little use in a landscape transformed by crisis. “Statistical methodologies,” the researchers warn, “cannot capture the impacts of sudden unanticipated events, such as diseases, disasters, or other crises.”

In such cases, the human touch is needed. Working quickly to assess the fast-moving situation, a panel of experts use their wisdom and discretion to adjust statistical forecasts. This is known as judgemental forecasting. However, this method also has drawbacks. For example, the researchers note, “it might be biased by the panel members’ optimism or pessimism”.

Clearly, in the wake of black swan events like the pandemic, traditional methods of forecasting are simply not good enough. In these uniquely turbulent times, the researchers realised, what the tourism industry needs is “a more systematic and reliable forecasting method that incorporates the advantages of existing forecasting methods”.

A Pioneering Approach

Faced with this challenge, the researchers offered a ground-breaking solution. “We describe the first attempt to combine three methods”, they explain, “to generate *ex ante* forecasts of the recovery of tourism demand in response to the unanticipated effects of crises”. Their novel “belt and braces” approach not only combines the strengths of statistical and judgemental forecasting but also minimises sources of human bias, such as wishful thinking.

Focusing on Hong Kong, the researchers first created baseline statistical forecasts based on past data: how many tourists would have arrived if the pandemic had not happened? They took into account the cost of holidaying in Hong Kong, the cost of travelling to alternative destinations, the income levels of tourists from different source markets, and other unique characteristics of these source markets.

Next, the researchers presented their baseline forecasts to a carefully selected panel of tourism experts, including both academics and practitioners. The experts were invited to adjust the researchers’ statistical forecasts based on their first-hand knowledge of the COVID-19 pandemic. Focusing

on three scenarios, mild, medium and severe, they indicated when they thought Hong Kong's tourist numbers would reach their lowest point, when visitor arrivals would recover, and why.

Shining a light on the path ahead for Hong Kong tourism, the researchers' analysis revealed that the industry "will likely begin to recover gradually from the crisis in 2022". Using their novel forecasting approach, "the specific recovery speed associated with each origin market could be projected". Nearby markets such as Macau, mainland China, and Taiwan will be the first to bounce back, once Hong Kong's entry and exit restrictions are relaxed. Other short-haul markets in Asia will follow, and finally Hong Kong will welcome back travellers from long-haul markets such as the US.

## **The Next Steps**

"From a crisis management perspective", say the researchers, "this study provides several suggestions for business planners and policymakers regarding the recovery of tourism demand after a crisis". Due to the uncertainty and volatility created by COVID-19, caution is needed. "Tourism recovery should involve a gradual process based on a phased-action plan aimed at corresponding markets", the researchers explain.

Offering discounts on airline tickets and accommodation will be a good start. With travellers' confidence in Hong Kong already dented by social unrest, destination marketers should invest in promoting the city's attractions via social media. For now, they should focus on short-haul visitors, who represent Hong Kong's largest market. Above all, the researchers advise, "timely and effective crisis management strategies" will help build resilience to future black swan events.

With crisis comes change. Although COVID-19 has dealt an unprecedented blow to the tourism industry, the authors remind us, "it has also provided practitioners with opportunities to consider tourism reform and innovation, international cooperation, and regional communication". With the help of the researchers' novel forecasting approach, tourism businesses will be well placed to identify and seize these opportunities in the months and years ahead.

Already, say the researchers, policymakers worldwide are finding new and exciting ways to rebuild and reimagine tourism. They are "promoting smart and digital tourism, rebuilding confidence in tourist sectors, providing financial support and stimulating consumption markets". Unprecedented times call for creative new measures, and the researchers' innovative forecasting method will be at the heart of these efforts. Fortunately, they note, "tourists have a strong desire to travel to relieve the depression associated with epidemic fatigue".

## **Recovery and Beyond**

Recovery does not mean going back to how things were. As the world inches out of crisis, it is becoming clear that COVID-19 has changed our lives for good. Thanks to this ground-breaking study, Hong Kong's tourism industry now has the toolset it needs to predict, understand, and adapt to future changes in travellers' behaviour. But Hong Kong will not be the only beneficiary. "The method proposed in this study", the researchers explain, "could be generalized and used to forecast the recovery of travel demand at other destinations facing major crises". As their integrated approach shows, collaboration – between humans and computers,

scholars and practitioners – will be key to helping the global tourism industry survive and thrive in the post-pandemic world. With its outstanding researchers and deep links to local and global tourism, the SHTM is perfectly placed to lead this recovery.

### **POINTS TO NOTE**

- To recover from COVID-19, tourism businesses need to be able to predict tourism demand.
- In the uncertain and volatile environment created by the pandemic, an integrated forecasting approach is the best way to predict tourism recovery.
- Hong Kong's tourism industry will recover gradually in 2022, beginning with short-haul markets.
- Tourism practitioners and policymakers should take gradual steps to attract and retain visitors and reform the industry.

Hanyuan Zhang, Haiyan Song, Long Wen and Chang Liu (2021). Forecasting Tourism Recovery amid COVID-19. *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 87, 103149.

# Making Newlyweds' Dreams Come True

For many couples, a romantic honeymoon is an important element of the perfect wedding. How do destination marketers and tourism service providers ensure that their offerings live up to honeymooners' holiday fantasies? In an important recent study, the SHTM's Jin-Soo Lee and his co-researchers explored the quality dimensions that contribute to honeymooners' satisfaction and relationship with the destination, providing useful information and advice for destination marketers seeking to capture this market segment.

## **The Perfect Vacation**

Enjoying the perfect vacation is an important part of the romantic fantasy for newlywed couples. A honeymoon is a "once in a lifetime moment", say the researchers. It is often the first chance for couples to "spend intimate time" in an exclusive and exotic place, where they can begin to create their first shared memories.

A honeymoon is something to fantasise about during the long process of planning the wedding, but the details of this fantasy may differ. Honeymooners look for "a variety of tourist attractions", write the researchers, such as beautiful scenery, luxury accommodation and spa treatments. Convenient transport and a safe and pleasant environment are also indispensable.

However, turning such fantasies into reality is an expensive business. Honeymooning couples spend three times more than they would on a typical holiday.

Unsurprisingly, say the researchers, destinations have "devoted aggressive efforts" to attracting this market segment, which has great potential to boost tourism income for accommodation providers, restaurants, entertainment venues and tour companies. Honeymoon tourists visiting Thailand, for instance, contribute approximately US\$1.5 billion in tourism revenue per year.

How can honeymoon destinations stand out in this increasingly competitive market? According to the researchers, destination managers need to understand what "influences the experience and fantasy of honeymooners" before they can "develop strategic plans and design products" that meet their clients' expectations. The perception of quality is a particularly important element in fulfilling honeymooners' fantasies. Surprisingly, however, the relationship between quality and fantasy has rarely been the focus of research.

Furthermore, while many studies measure tourists' satisfaction based on their intention to return, there is a serious problem with this approach. No matter how much tourists like a destination, they may still not choose to return, because there are so many alternatives. "Relational value", the researchers argue, is a better measure of tourists' satisfaction with a destination, as it captures supportive behaviour such as recommending the destination to others. Developing relationships with customers is vital, because it helps to build lifelong support and maintain the destination's success over the long term. The researchers set out to explore "what

triggers honeymoon fantasies" and whether fulfilling these fantasies affects a destination's relational value.

## **Survey in Thailand**

Phuket, a province in southern Thailand, was the perfect setting for the study. Famous for its "beautiful natural resources, exciting tourist activities, and rich local heritage", note the researchers, Phuket attracts nearly a third of Thailand's international tourist arrivals, including many newlyweds. In autumn 2017, the researchers collected data from honeymooners arriving at Phuket's international airport.

Filling an important gap in hospitality and tourism studies, the researchers developed the first ever scale to measure quality attributes of honeymoon tourism. Their scale measured seven distinct aspects of honeymoon quality: honeymoon service provider, honeymooner privileges, hospitality of local residents, accessibility, dining experience, and local tour products.

The survey also included a measure of fantasy, with items such as "this honeymoon trip was the fulfilment of all my romantic fantasies". To measure relational value, tourists answered questions about their willingness to recommend the destination, give feedback, share useful information, and provide suggestions for improvement, and also the degree to which they remained "supportive of a firm despite negative publicity or better deals from competitors".

## Recipe for Romance

Honeymooner privileges such as in-room romantic breakfasts, a complimentary night's stay and surprise gifts played the biggest part in fulfilling newlyweds' romantic fantasies. One of the most important tasks for service providers, therefore, is to "design special treatments for honeymooners". Hotels could offer premium airport passes, champagne breakfasts, or complimentary honeymoon activities such as a couple's massage or Thai cooking class. Destination managers could "go the extra mile", the researchers suggest, by hosting a honeymooners' party at "an iconic venue, such as a private beach, a luxury yacht, or a scenic rooftop restaurant".

Honeymoon accommodation and local tour products were also found to be important quality dimensions. By "attempting to convey a sense of luxury, embrace symbols of romance, and respect honeymooner privacy" in their accommodation and activity offerings, say the researchers, honeymoon service providers can develop the "pleasurable and intimate fantasies of newlywed couples". The researchers advise tourism service providers to offer regular staff training in customer service etiquette and service delivery to ensure they meet honeymooners' high expectations. They also propose the interesting idea of organising "familiarisation trips" during off-peak seasons, during which honeymoon specialists and wedding planners can experience the destination and its unique tourism products for themselves. This would not only make good use of tourism resources in the off-peak season but also help tourism managers and staff to understand the desires of honeymooners from the perspective of "honeymoon elites".

Good accessibility is also important, because honeymooners spend "considerable time and money on their dream trip" and expect a smooth trip and exceptional service. Although honeymooners might choose an "exotic, remote place" for their romantic getaway, infrequent and unreliable transport hardly contributes to a romantic fantasy vacation. Providing a limousine service would be a welcome option for many honeymooners. However, destinations should also ensure that reliable public transport options are readily available so that couples can easily travel around to "explore romantic experiences".

## Ambassadors for Destinations

An important finding of the study is that fulfilment of honeymooners' fantasies was strongly associated with the destination's relational value. When honeymooners' fantasies are realised, they become emotionally attached to the destination and willing to recommend it to others. They are also likely to provide suggestions for improvement, the researchers find, and they show a "strong resistance to supporting other honeymoon destinations that offer better deals". In other words, even if couples do not intend to revisit their honeymooner destination, if it fulfils their fantasies, they will become advocates for the destination and contribute to its long-term success.

## Thailand and Beyond

The study enhances our understanding of the honeymoon tourism market by identifying the specific quality attributes that help to fulfil the fantasy element of this once-in-a-lifetime romantic

vacation. Although the researchers acknowledge that the particular quality attributes they identified might not be relevant to other honeymoon settings, such as "winter honeymoon, old world romance honeymoon and theme park honeymoon" experiences, they will certainly be useful for exotic, tropical destinations similar to Phuket. Finally, an important contribution of the study is the development of a novel honeymoon quality measurement scale, which provides a useful set of attributes for honeymoon service providers to focus on when designing and improving their products and services.

## POINTS TO NOTE

- Fantasy is an important element of a romantic honeymoon, but the quality elements that contribute to fantasy have rarely been studied.
- Quality elements include honeymoon privileges, accommodation, local tour products, and accessibility.
- Fulfilling honeymooners' fantasies enhances the destination's relational value and thus contributes to its success.
- Tourism service providers should focus on a range of services and products that fulfil honeymooners' fantasies.

Pipatpong Fakfare, Jin-Soo Lee and Kisang Ryu (2020). Examining Honeymoon Tourist Behavior: Multidimensional Quality, Fantasy, and Destination Relational Value. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, Vol. 37, Issue 7, pp. 836-853.

# Could Robots Breathe New “Life” Into the Tourism Industry?

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit the tourism and hospitality industry hard, making employees and travellers alike more wary of close human interaction. Could robots and other artificial intelligence (AI) technologies be the answer? To tackle this controversial question, Seongseop Kim, Frank Badu-Baiden, and Youngjoon Choi from the SHTM and their co-researchers conducted a timely online study comparing human- and robot-staffed hotels. The study provides fascinating insights into how the pandemic has changed tourists' preferences and offers recommendations for hotels on taking the next step towards technology-driven service delivery.

## Robots at Reception

Robots have long been part of a science-fiction future. Although it has taken a long time for this future to be realised, robots and other AI technologies have recently begun to take over some of the service functions in hotels. They may serve as cooks or cleaners, provide barista and butler services, or even welcome guests on the front desk. This trend is regarded by some as an "avenue for innovation and improved efficiency and profitability", the researchers note. However, hotel guests may be less enthusiastic.

It is easy enough to understand why some customers do not immediately love the idea of being served by a robot. Hotels are a "symbol of hospitality", say the

researchers, "which manifests as human values or touch". Indeed, part of the enjoyment of staying in a hotel is experiencing the "serene atmosphere of comfort and relaxation" conveyed by the service staff. When guests experience a personalised service and feel valued by employees who offer "kind gestures, such as smiles, greeting and pleasant eye contact", they are more likely to feel an attachment to the hotel and to stay loyal to the brand.

Why, then, would hotels consider introducing robot services? One reason is that human service also has its downsides. For instance, the researchers note, when staff fail to deliver the expected level of service, guests may be dissatisfied and their "experiences may be marred". Furthermore, as humans are fallible, occasional mistakes are inevitable and can result in inconvenience and even, at worst, litigation, financial loss and damage to the hotel's reputation.

On a more positive note, the researchers explain, many people enjoy technological advancements, appreciate the "usefulness and ease of use" of service robots and like to show off their novel experience to others. They may experience "reduced waiting times for service delivery, fun, enjoyment, and flexibility" from robot service technology. There are also many advantages for hotels, which benefit from more efficient service delivery, reduced labour costs, greater standardisation, and improved productivity and competitiveness.

With mixed evidence to date on people's attitudes towards robot hotel services, the researchers were interested in whether views may have changed with the current COVID-19 crisis, which has brought extensive social distancing measures and concern about human contact. They speculated that the "highly contagious" nature of COVID-19 may have made people more enthusiastic about robot services in hotels. After all, the researchers note, robots offer a reduced risk of infection, especially given the "high levels of interpersonal contact in human-serviced hotels".

## Human versus Robot Staff

The study took place in the United States between May and September 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The data were collected in a series of four online studies with participants recruited through Amazon MTurk, an online participant panel. Between 113 and 171 participants were recruited for each study, with an approximately even split between men and women and a mean age of 36 to 40.

The participants were asked to imagine that they were planning to visit a city and had to choose from one of two hotels. They were then presented with pictures of a human-staffed hotel and a robot-staffed hotel. After comparing these pictures, which showed humans or robots working on the front desk,

handling luggage, cooking, and so on, the participants were asked which hotel they would prefer to stay in.

In each study, the researchers sought to find out whether the participants' preference for the robot-staffed hotel increased when they felt more at risk. This was important, the researchers explain, because "the anxiety caused by human contact and the perception of possible contagion can influence travelers to undertake risk-averse behaviors, such as avoiding human-staffed hotels". Different kinds of information were provided to different participants so that some were made more aware of the pandemic while making their decisions.

The researchers also looked at whether the participants' preferences changed according to, for instance, their level of concern about safety and social distancing and how they felt about innovative technology.

### **A "New Normal"?**

In a resounding show of support for AI concierges, butlers, and cleaners, the results of all four studies indicated a preference for the robot-staff hotel. The researchers concluded that the pandemic may have accelerated the acceptance of service robots because they are "beneficial for maintaining social distancing and reducing anxiety regarding contagion through human interaction". Clearly, customers' attitudes towards new technology can be changed by a "particular event or crisis". The longer the current crisis goes on, the greater people will perceive the threat to be. This threat, the researchers predict, will be "imprinted on customers' memories even after the COVID-19 crisis ends".

Inevitably, therefore, health and hygiene standards will remain high for some time. Service robots equipped with AI can provide contactless services in a wide range of settings, such as hotels, restaurants, airports and events, to allay customers' concerns about safety. However, facilities eager to provide this kind of service should be mindful of the researchers' advice that to be successful, they will need to provide "clear instructions and guidelines to lower barriers to first-time users". This will help to ensure that guests do not become frustrated by and reject the new technology.

Although their findings suggest that people are becoming more accepting of robot-service hotels, the researchers highlight an important potential caveat. They remind us that the participants who felt more at risk due to COVID-19 had a greater preference for the robot-staffed hotel. Once the pandemic is over and customers no longer feel so anxious about contagion, they may come to prefer human services again. The solution, the researchers suggest, lies in marketing and promotion. Hotels should target customers who feel particularly threatened by the pandemic by "promoting the health and safety aspects of service robots".

### **The Time is Right for AI**

The researchers' novel findings suggest that in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, with concerns about health and safety running high, the time may be ripe for the hotel and tourism industry to expand the introduction of robot and AI services. The world is already moving rapidly toward the introduction of high-level technologies, and the pandemic offers a "good opportunity for

pioneers to act". Armed with the researchers' timely insights, hotels may be better placed to capitalise on "the usefulness of service robots in maintaining social distancing and preventing the spread of infectious diseases". This can only be good news for an industry dealt a formidable blow by COVID-19. What was once seen as a threat to the hospitality and tourism industry may now be its best means of survival.

### **POINTS TO NOTE**

- Robot and other AI technologies are increasingly used in the tourism industry.
- Customer acceptance of robot services in hotels is mixed, posing an obstacle to their widespread introduction.
- Health concerns and social distancing due to COVID-19 seem to be changing consumer preferences.
- Now may be the right time for hotels to speed up the rollout of robots.

Seongseop (Sam) Kim, Jengkeu Kim, Frank Badu-Baiden, Marily Giroux, and Youngjoon Choi (2021). Preference for Robot Service or Human Service in Hotels. Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 93, 102795.

# Money or Miles for Frequent Flyers?

"CANCELLED": The word no passenger wants to see on an airport display board. Failing to appease disgruntled clientele can seriously damage customer relationships. Dodging the kickback of service failures is therefore supremely important, especially when customers have already pledged their allegiance to a company – as have frequent flyers. But how should loyal customers be compensated? In an important recent study, the SHTM's YooHee Hwang and Lisa Gao and their co-author explored the best ways to regain customer loyalty after a service failure. The unprecedented flight disruptions due to COVID-19 make their findings all the more relevant today.

### **What Customers Expect**

In the hospitality and tourism industry, failures to meet customers' expectations are inevitable. However, it might not be the service error itself that causes customers to take their business elsewhere, but the way in which a company chooses to deal with it. "An effective service recovery", say the researchers, "can restore customer trust and fairness perceptions".

Air travel is a great example of a service prone to disruptions, and, for the researchers, a prime context in which to investigate service repair options. Flight delays and cancellations are all too common, and the stakes can be high for passengers, who might have flight connections, tight work schedules, or financial constraints. Moreover, service repair has been largely overlooked in the context of loyalty reward schemes, which

is surprising given how common these are. How best to soften the blow for passengers who are already loyalty reward programme members?

One downside to disappointing customers who are already "loyal" is that they have higher expectations. This can result in more scrutiny and criticism, making it difficult to satisfy customers through recovery methods. However, all is not lost, say the researchers. "On the other hand, heightened expectations may provide the service provider with an opportunity to enhance the relationship with its customers". In that sense, service failures could be treated as an opportunity to further consolidate customer relationships.

Many airlines offer frequent flyers different compensation options when service errors occur. For instance, United Airlines offers the choice of receiving free miles or monetary compensation for flights that are delayed for 4 hours. One key difference between miles and monetary compensation options is how "concrete" they are. Air miles compensation "doesn't have a physical form that customers can touch", the researchers point out, whereas discount coupons do. Curiously, this "concreteness" makes all the difference. In other hospitality and tourism sectors, more concrete compensation has been found to increase customer loyalty. The researchers therefore predicted that "recovery compensation in a more concrete form should induce loyalty reward members' repatronage intention". This effect might also rely on the nature of the initial failure – could the company have avoided it, or not?

### **Controllability Counts**

Service failures can be broadly considered as those that are within a company's control, and those that are not. This "controllability" can also govern customers' reactions – for instance, customers are far more forgiving when flight delays are a result of bad weather than when they are due to a scheduling error made by the flight crew.

"If a failed service is within the firm's control, customers perceive high levels of controllability", explain the researchers. Another example is inattentive service by a waiter during off-peak hours. The researchers found that passengers were angrier about and more disappointed by service failures that they perceived to be within the firm's control.

Such negative emotions can prompt "low-level thinking" – the tendency to construe things in a concrete way, focusing on the immediate details of an event or object rather than its wider context. The researchers thus suggest that "high controllability of a service failure heightens the customer's negative affect, thereby resulting in a concrete mindset". Does this more concrete mindset, in turn, affect the impact of compensation concreteness on passenger loyalty? The researchers' next task was to answer this question.

### **Frequent Flyers Quizzed**

Using an experimental design, the researchers assessed the specific effects of the controllability of service failure and compensation concreteness. The participants

were 197 members of frequent flyer programmes with a mean age of 37 years living in the US. The researchers first presented them with the hypothetical scenario of a delayed flight of a fictional airline, “ABC Airlines”.

Some of the participants were told that their flight was delayed due to bad weather (a low controllability scenario) and the rest were told that the delay was a result of an internal scheduling error (a high controllability scenario). “The participants were then compensated with either a 50-dollar travel certificate for their next flight or 2,500 miles credited to their frequent flyer program account”, which corresponded to more and less concrete compensation options, respectively.

Having set up different levels of controllability and compensation concreteness, the researchers measured repatronage intention. For this, the participants simply indicated whether they would fly with ABC Airlines again if they had experienced the situation in real life. Negative emotions were also measured, including irritation, annoyance, disappointment, dissatisfaction, and frustration. In this way, the researchers could more precisely define how to best atone for service failures and temper customers’ anger and disappointment.

### Win-Win Solutions

The first critical finding was that the controllability of a service failure determined customers’ emotional reactions. That is, customers were less angry and disappointed when the flight delay was perceived to be out of ABC Airlines’ hands, compared with when the airline was perceived to be at fault. Therefore, the authors recommend that service providers “be transparent and let customers

know the cause of the failure”. Offering this information and discovering customers’ reactions will also help companies to redress the service failure.

When choosing compensation, airlines should take the controllability of the service error into consideration. For the “controllable” failings, the researchers found that monetary compensation better restored loyalty than did air miles compensation. Crucially, this indicates that airlines should offer concrete compensation options, such as money or discount vouchers, when the service failure is within the company’s control. “Offering a more concrete option can be a win-win situation for both companies and loyal customers”, say the researchers.

However, when the flight delay was beyond the airline’s control, monetary and free air miles compensation had the same effects on repatronage intention. This could be because “customers’ construal levels are not as concrete, and thus repatronage intention is not influenced by the concreteness of recovery options”, say the researchers. Practically, this means airlines can adopt either concrete compensation, such as a discount voucher, or less tangible compensation, such as free miles, to make amends when they are not to blame for the service failure.

From a more theoretical perspective, this study “extends the notion of congruency effect in the frequent flyer program context”, propose the researchers. Namely, when customers have a more “concrete” mindset, they should be offered more “concrete” compensation options. This aligns with previous findings that external stimuli, such as compensation options, should be matched to customers’ internal mental states to achieve the best outcomes.

### Recovering Loyalty

This study offers useful recommendations for airlines wishing to recover the loyalty of frequent flyers. Exploring uncharted territory, the researchers pinpoint ways to properly handle a botched service and to help customers feel valued. Understanding the mindset and emotions of disappointed customers puts companies in a better position to make strategic choices when it comes to excusing themselves to already loyal members. Anticipating customers’ reactions to being let down could even enhance that loyalty, and not just for airlines – any company offering a loyalty scheme has something to gain from this work.

### POINTS TO NOTE

- After service failure, airlines must properly compensate customers, especially frequent flyers, to regain their loyalty.
- When customers have high expectations, dealing effectively with service failure can actually be an opportunity to consolidate customer relationships.
- Passengers are more disappointed by service failure when they believe that it is outside the airline’s control.
- When service failure could have been prevented by the airline, it is best to compensate passengers concretely, by providing them with money rather than air miles.

YooHee Hwang, Lisa Gao and Anna S. Mattilab (2020). What Recovery Options to Offer for Loyalty Reward Program Members: Dollars vs. Miles? *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 87, 102496.

## Deepening Partnerships

### MicroMasters in International Hospitality Management

The SHTM recently celebrated another milestone in the development of its pioneering online MicroMasters in International Hospitality Management (MM). This summer, 23 undergraduates from Kansai Gaidai University (KGU) in Osaka, Japan enrolled in one of the four MM courses, HTM541x Luxury Management. Although the programme has already attracted more than 90,000 participants from across the world, this is the first time that the School’s MM credits have been formally acknowledged by another university.

In their spring semester, KGU students normally travel abroad to study at a partner university. With travel restrictions in place due to the pandemic, the SHTM’s fully online MM programme offered the perfect alternative. Delivered via the world-renowned edX online learning platform, these top-tier courses can be taken anywhere and at any time. They represent the future of hospitality education in the digital age – and the age of COVID-19.

The collaboration will also strengthen the SHTM’s longstanding and fruitful partnership with KGU. “The students will greatly benefit from taking our online course”, said Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean and Chair Professor and Walter and

Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management, at a Virtual Welcoming Ceremony on 27 April.

“The Luxury Management course is a good choice”, said Professor Cathy Hsu, SHTM Chair Professor and programme leader. Luxury hospitality may play an important role in the industry’s post-pandemic recovery, and the MM provides up-to-the-minute training in luxury brand management, marketing, and more.

“This course is quite different from online courses offered by other institutions”, added Professor Hsu, “as it is designed to be interactive and fun”. Along with video presentations by renowned scholars from the SHTM and around the world, the students from KGU will enjoy a stimulating range of online learning activities, from case studies to live events. The SHTM is also lucky to have a “great support team”, said Professor Hsu, to ensure that learning is smooth and problem-free.

“This is the first time that we will take a course online with such a

93,700+ enrolments

3,076 edX verifications

From 198 countries and regions

well-known and well-respected institution”, said Professor Stephen A. Zurcher, Dean of the Hospitality Management Programme at KGU, who signed up alongside his students. He explained how KGU’s long-term relationship with the SHTM had guided the development of his own programme, and recalled a comment made by Dean Chon four years earlier: “Steve, why don’t you just have your students study here at PolyU?” Today, that is exactly what they are doing.

The School seized another opportunity to promote learning across borders this year by participating in the University Alliance of the Silk Road (UASR) Virtual Summer Courses 2021. Alongside other world-leading scholars in multiple fields and disciplines, SHTM faculty are offering the MM course HTM540x Innovation and Technology Management in Tourism and Hospitality free of charge to teachers and students from UASR member universities. You can find out more about this important international endeavour elsewhere in the issue. **H**



# Investing in People

People are the beating heart of hospitality and tourism, and the industry has rarely been in greater need of human capital to guide its recovery from crisis. Rising splendidly to this challenge, the SHTM has again hosted the internationally recognised Certified Hospitality Educator (CHE) Workshop and developed a series of innovative tailor-made Executive Development Programmes to hone the skills of industry professionals.

On 7-12 January, the SHTM hosted the latest in the prestigious series of CHE workshops, the fruit of its longstanding collaboration with the American Hotel & Lodging

Educational Institute. The CHE programme is designed for hospitality educators at every level, particularly those with industry experience. Obtaining the CHE certification sets them apart as leaders in both the industry and the classroom.

Online learning is the “new normal” in the era of COVID-19, and the 2021 CHE programme embraced the flexibility offered by e-learning. Leading the virtual workshop was Dr Fred Mayo, Principal of Mayo Consulting Services and Clinical Professor of Hospitality and Tourism Management, New York University.

In five exclusively developed sessions, each lasting for 3.5 hours, Dr Mayo delivered innovative training in interactive teaching skills.

The workshop’s 22 participants had the chance not only to learn from Dr Mayo but also to network with other educators to discuss and put into practice the latest teaching principles and skills. They shared an important vision: to provide the best possible educational experience for hospitality students worldwide. Taking the CHE exam gave the participants the chance to put their newfound skills and insights to the test. This was another milestone on their journey of lifelong learning,

as the formal CHE designation – awarded by the Institute to all those who pass the exam – is prized among hospitality educators worldwide.

To excel, educators must keep up with changes in teaching and provide high-quality experiences for all students. Hospitality education is no exception. The engaging workshop approach offered by the CHE programme empowers participants to confidently bring industry knowledge and excellence to hospitality students around the world, whether digitally or in person. The SHTM is proud to have hosted another CHE workshop in collaboration with the American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute.

## Bringing Innovation to the Industry

Every year, the SHTM invests in the industry by designing a series of exclusive Executive Development Programmes (EDP) to develop the skills and knowledge of hospitality professionals.

In March, the SHTM launched an EDP for its longstanding partner, the Chimelong Group, a leading theme park conglomerate in the GBA. The first module, delivered by Professor Brian King, SHTM Associate Dean, focused on managing organisational change. Next on the agenda was human resources management, covered by Dr Crystal Shi, SHTM Assistant Professor. The SHTM’s Professor Kam Hung discussed consumer behaviours in the industry. Fourth, Chimelong executives learned about innovation and digital transformation from

Dr Dan Wang, SHTM Associate Professor, Dr Qu Xiao, SHTM Associate Professor, and Dr Daniel Leung, SHTM Assistant Professor.

From March to May, the SHTM also trained senior executives of Nina Hospitality. Originally known as L’hotel Hospitality Groups, this homegrown Hong Kong hotel chain has been rebranded by its parent organisation Chinachem Group to reflect its passion for providing guests with personalised experiences. To help executives adjust to this “reboot”, the SHTM provided six modules of tailor-made training in areas ranging from change management to digital marketing.

April saw the SHTM share its own pioneering vision and approach in two webinars designed for members of the University Alliance of the Silk Road and its Tourism Sub-alliance. In the first webinar, held on 1 April, Dr Tony Tse, SHTM Professor of Practice and Programme Director (Industry Partnerships), addressed the all-important topic of innovation in hospitality and tourism education. He provided fascinating insights into how the SHTM’s partnership with Hotel ICON has made the School the world’s leading centre for hospitality education.

Professor Cathy Hsu, SHTM Chair Professor of Hospitality and Tourism Marketing, hosted the second webinar on 23 April, presenting the School’s ground-breaking online edX MicroMasters in International Hospitality Management (MM). Professor Hsu vividly illustrated the business management opportunities afforded by the programme and explained how it can be incorporated into university courses to nurture talented hospitality and tourism professionals along the Silk Road.

Rarely have the unique affordances of the MM programme been in greater demand than

today. With travel restrictions still in place due to the pandemic, the programme offers the perfect platform for cross-border learning, delivering top-tier online teaching and educational resources at anytime and anywhere. This year, the School took part in the University Alliance of the Silk Road (UASR) Virtual Summer Courses 2021 programme, offering the MM course Innovation Management in Tourism and Hospitality free of charge to teachers and students at UASR member institutions. The SHTM is proud to contribute to this innovative international endeavour, which for the second year in a row is delivering high-quality online educational resources to learners across the region.

From April to May 2021, the SHTM provided its third 4-week study programme for MSc students from Ferrandi Paris, a leading French culinary training school. This year, 45 students participated via a dedicated online learning platform. They first learned about tourism development in Asia from Dr Vincent Tung, SHTM Associate Professor, and Professor Brian King, SHTM Associate Dean. The second half of the programme was delivered by Dr Qu Xiao, who addressed the timely topic of innovation in hospitality.

Perfectly capturing its commitment to developing human capital for the benefit of the industry, the SHTM has also delivered the first phase of an EDP for Wanda Hotels & Resorts, covering digital marketing and innovation, leadership, and strategic management in hospitality and tourism. **H**



SHTM Alumni Reunion in Shanghai

Strength lies in partnership, as the SHTM continues to demonstrate through its collaboration with Zhejiang University in mainland China. Two landmark alumni events held this year celebrated the fruits of this cooperation, the Doctor of Hotel and Tourism Management (D.HTM) and MSc in Hotel and

in detail by the programme leaders, Dr Qu Xiao, SHTM Associate Professor, and Dr Dan Wang, SHTM Associate Professor, respectively.

Over the course of the day, the participants learned how the School's unique mainland programmes shape industry leaders

Ms Fujiao Chen, Secretary General of the Hunan Tourism Association, acted as MC for the event. Dean Chon and Dr Olive Wang, Senior Manager (Alumni Affairs) of PolyU's Chinese Mainland Affairs Office, delivered congratulatory speeches online. Both expressed their eagerness to find out what the future holds for the Association.

The crucial contribution to the industry made by the SHTM's mainland China programmes and their alumni was the theme of a speech delivered by the President of the new Association, Mr Elton Sun, Vice President of Hyatt China and CEO and Managing Director of UrCove by Hyatt. Next, alumni offered warm and entertaining accounts of their time in Hangzhou. Career planning, innovation and post-pandemic travel opportunities were explored in the following sessions, along with emerging demand and supply challenges.

Alumni of these pioneering mainland programmes are central to the continuing success of the SHTM. This year's exciting calendar of inaugural events testifies to the School's dedication to serving Asia's dynamic hospitality and tourism industry through its network of highly competent, creative alumni. **H**

## Strengthening Our Legacy

Tourism Management programmes hosted by the Zhejiang University-PolyU Joint Center in Hangzhou.

On 27 March, history was made at the first annual PolyU SHTM Info Seminar for Postgraduate Degrees cum Alumni Reunion. At Guangzhou's W Hotel, more than 100 alumni and postgraduates gathered for a seminar, experience sharing, discussion, and a dinner.

An inspiring opening speech was delivered online by the SHTM's Professor Kaye Chon, Dean and Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management. Next, the strengths of the D.HTM and MSc were described

and set new standards for hospitality and tourism education. Alumni from cohorts ranging from 2000 to 2020 shared their experiences, followed by a lively panel discussion between executives from leading hospitality businesses. The event culminated in a speech by Professor Jin-Guang Teng, PolyU President.

Another milestone in the development of the SHTM's mainland China offering came on 15 May, when about 200 alumni from the Yangtze River Delta gathered at the Cordis Shanghai Hongqiao Hotel to celebrate the establishment of the SHTM Mainland Alumni Association. The Association will offer a new "home" for SHTM alumni seeking to forge closer connections with their alma mater and each other.

# In Brief...

## Exceptional Student

**Ms Wong Hei Ching (Onyx)**, a final-year student in the BSc (Hons) in Hotel Management programme, received the **SHTM Outstanding Student Award** and the **Most Outstanding PolyU Student Award 2020** at a presentation ceremony on 12 March 2021.

The Outstanding Student Awards recognise full-time final-year students who excel both academically and non-academically. Ms Wong's eclectic achievements mark her out as one of the School's best and brightest students. Alongside her exceptional academic record, she has volunteered in special education for children, completed a work placement in Australia, and won an inter-school rope skipping competition in Hong Kong.

"I had never imagined the knowledge, competence and growth I could gain in these four years", said Ms Wong. She expressed her gratitude to PolyU for all of the "many opportunities and wonderful experiences" that helped her "become who I am today". Ms Wong is a true role model who is sure to succeed in her ambition to become an entrepreneur within the hospitality industry.



## Internationally Recognised Research



In the **Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2020**, the SHTM placed among the **top five schools** within PolyU, with 80% of its faculty's research publications rated at 4\* (World-Leading) or 3\* (Internationally Excellent). Two of three research impact case studies and the research environment submission were rated as world-leading. The RAE is an exercise managed by the University Grants Committee to assess the work of Hong Kong's researchers against international standards. The School is justly proud that the high quality of its outstanding faculty has been recognised once again and that our researchers continue to extend the frontiers of knowledge in the field.

## Photography Contest Winner Announced

Congratulations to Ph.D. student **Fanny Katherine Manner** on winning the **Hospitality & Tourism @ Home with SHTM Contest!** The contest encouraged all staff and students to share images on social media that celebrate the world we can see around us, despite being unable to travel. Ms Manner's photo showed her enjoying the spring sunshine as she celebrated the New Year of the Ox. She received her prize in person from Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management. She is the lucky winner of a free lunch for two at GREEN, Hotel ICON's stunning brasserie.



## Long Service Awards



The School is fortunate and proud to have a substantial number of experienced and long-serving staff and faculty members, eight of whom were recently honoured by PolyU with **Long Service Awards**: **Professor Kaye Chon**, SHTM Dean and Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management; **Professor Rob Law**, Associate Professors **Dr Eric Chan**, **Dr Henry Tsai** and **Dr Nelson Tsang**; **Ms Carol Chan**, Assistant Officer; **Mr Chris Luk**, Executive Officer; and **Mr Murphy Tang**, Senior Information Technology Officer. The School congratulates them all and thanks them for their loyal and dedicated service over the years.



### Elite Management Programme

This year, six of the SHTM's brightest Year 2 BSc students have been selected to join the **Elite Management Programme**. They will have the chance to mirror managers at Hotel ICON, giving them invaluable management experience and the foundation necessary to work as supervisors or managers upon graduation.

The participants will undertake full-time training and internships in various departments at Hotel ICON for 11 months, divided into two phases: June to August 2021 and January to August 2022. They are all BSc in Hotel Management students: **Ms Cheryl Chan, Mr Anthony Shangshu Liu, Ms Amelia Jane Smith, Mr Tobias Shiu-to So, Ms Aki On-hei Woo, and Ms Beatrice Chin-yan Yu.**

# Staff Updates



**Professor Sangwon Park** joined the School on 1 March 2021 as a Visiting Professor.



**Dr Jaehee Gim** joined the School as an Assistant Professor on 2 August 2021.



**Ms Pellie Hong** joined the School as an Instructor on 2 August 2021.



**Ms Julianna Ching** was promoted to the position of Executive Officer with effect from 1 March 2021.



**Dr Michael Lin** joined the School as an Assistant Professor on 2 August 2021.



**Ms Shirina Sit** joined the School as an Executive Assistant on 2 August 2021.



**Ms Tina Leung** joined the School as an Administrative Assistant on 8 March 2021.



**Dr Hailey Shin** joined the School as an Assistant Professor on 2 August 2021.



**Mr Delap Lui**, formerly a Restaurant Manager at the School's Bistro 1979, was appointed Instructor with effect from 3 August 2021.



**Ms Vanessa Liu** joined the School as an Executive Assistant on 21 June 2021.



**Dr Seunghun Shin** joined the School as an Assistant Professor on 2 August 2021.



**Ms Kristal Yau** joined the School as an Executive Assistant on 3 August 2021.



**Professor Rob Law** was appointed as Honorary Professor in Information Technology in Hospitality and Tourism with effect from 1 July 2021.



**Dr Mahlagha Darvish Motevali** joined the School as a Research Assistant Professors on 2 August 2021.



**Dr Abbie-Gayle Johnson** joined the School as an Assistant Professor on 14 August 2021.



**Dr Kam Hung** was promoted to Professor with effect from 1 July 2021.



**Dr Eden Jiao** joined the School as a Research Assistant Professors on 2 August 2021.



**Dr Sebastian Filep** assumed the role of SHTM Assistant Dean (International Collaboration) with effect from 16 August 2021.



**Dr Honggen Xiao** was promoted to Professor with effect from 1 July 2021. Professor Xiao also assumed the role of SHTM Assistant Dean (Research and Administration) with effect from 16 August 2021.



**Dr Alexandra Witte** joined the School as a Research Assistant Professors on 2 August 2021.



**Mr Ian Kam** joined the School as an Administrative Assistant on 30 August 2021. He provides administrative support to the Che-woo Lui Hotel and Tourism Resources Centre.



**Dr Youngjoon Choi** left his Assistant Professor role at the SHTM on 30 July 2021. He will be Associate Professor at Ewha Womans University in Korea.



**Dr Yitong Yu** joined the School as a Research Assistant Professors on 2 August 2021.



**Professor Dimitrios Buhalis** joined the School as a Visiting Professor for one year from 1 September 2021.



# Nurturing Student Aspirations

On 12 March, undergraduate and graduate students flocked to the School's 2021 Career Day to learn about potential career paths in the hospitality and tourism industry. Although held online this year due to COVID-19, the event was a huge success. Virtual exhibition booths were set up by 18 organisations, including local companies and international chains in the hospitality, catering, and tourism sectors.

The SHTM is grateful to the following organisations for helping to nurture our students' career aspirations. **H**

## 2021 Employers

Black Sheep Restaurants  
Conrad Hong Kong  
Cordis, Hong Kong  
Eaton HK  
Pentahotel Hong Kong, Kowloon  
Hotel ICON  
HotelsHR Limited  
Hyatt Hotel Corporation

Informa Markets  
Lanson Place Hospitality Management Limited  
Kew Green Hotel Wanchai Hong Kong  
Nina Hospitality  
OVOLO Hotels  
Rosewood Hotel Group  
Shangri-La Group

The Fullerton Ocean Park Hotel Hong Kong  
The Peninsula Hong Kong  
Wharf Hotels Management Limited



SHTM Students' Association Committee Members

# Showcasing Student Success

The SHTM provides undergraduate students with myriad learning opportunities beyond the classroom, and the campus is always abuzz with the activities of student-created clubs and student chapters of professional organisations. This year is no different, despite the ongoing pandemic: SHTM students are thriving and continuing to make a worldwide impact.

In March, a fresh chapter in student life began with the election of a new cabinet for the 17th session of the SHTM Students' Association. The name of the cabinet, "Elysian", perfectly captures the Association's mission to serve its members "with concord and delight".

Another landmark event in recent months was the 2021 Career Showcase of the Club Managers' Association (CMA) Student Chapter. To match the

SHTM's unique vision of education, the Chapter promised an event "unlike any other" – and the showcase certainly lived up to the hype! Instead of featuring industry partners, it turned the spotlight on outstanding student members.

The first was Tourism and Events Management major Esther Liu, who made an excellent impression as an intern at the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club in winter 2020. Rotating between the café/bistro and fine dining restaurant gave her invaluable food and beverage (F&B) experience. "Work as a team!" she advised future interns. "Be polite and offer help!"

Another student who excelled in an F&B role was Hotel Management major Yubin Nam, who interned at the Ladies' Recreation Club in 2019. She urged other

students to apply for internships with the CMA. "As long as you are willing to learn", she said, "you will learn a lot".

This sentiment was shared by Jennifer Hsu, Hotel Management major and the Chapter's current Chairperson. Although cut short by the pandemic, her internship at the Hong Kong Country Club taught her a lot about private club culture. "Members see the club as their second home", she realised.

Also under the spotlight was Sally Wang, who stood out for her 2019 internship at the Country Club of the American Club Hong Kong. "Be brave!" she advised future interns. "Step out of your comfort zone!" This is just what Sally did in February 2020, when she represented the CMA Student Chapter at an international conference on club management in Texas.

## Students at the Helm

Sharing the passion of the CMA Student Chapter are other professionally minded groups run by students for students. Sparing no effort to support their student members in times of uncertainty, the Institute of Hospitality Hong Kong (IoH) and Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) student chapters recently organised a series of stimulating professional development events.

In partnership with the SHTM Event Society, the IoH Student Chapter organised a webinar series entitled "Talk with a Hotel GM". Attendees gleaned first-hand insights into the industry's response to COVID-19 from two of Hong Kong's most experienced hoteliers:

Mr Richard Hatter, General Manager of Hotel ICON and SHTM Adjunct Associate Professor, and Mr Wilson Lee, General Manager of the Hyatt Regency Hong Kong.

Aspiring hoteliers also flocked to an important event organised by the PATA Student Chapter on 26 February. Students enjoyed an exclusive talk with Mr Leo Yen, Senior Regional Vice President at Hyatt Hotels Corporation, who shared invaluable advice on forging a career in hospitality.

Looking even further ahead, the PATA Student Chapter invited its members to explore the future of tourism with leading academics and industry experts. In two inspiring PATA Youth Webinars, attendees learned how tourism might benefit from innovative technologies such as virtual reality. In another webinar, guest speakers from the Tourism and Hospitality Club from RMIT Vietnam explained how COVID-19 has changed the landscape of work in hospitality and tourism.

Bacchus: SHTM Wine Society, also came under the spotlight this year.

In March 2021, the SHTM Event Society published the inaugural issue of *Eventure* magazine. This exciting new series will feature networking opportunities and the latest insights into the fast-moving events industry. Congratulating the society on this landmark achievement, Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean and Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management, praised its members for cultivating "a sense of pride and passion in the events industry".

The spring semester ended with a big win for The Bacchus, which was named Student Club of the Year 2020/21. Addressing the committee members, Dean Chon described the award as a "tribute to your talent, creativity and dedication". On 1 June, Miss Winny Japardy (President) and Miss Lillian Li (Vice President) accepted the award on behalf of The Bacchus, along with vouchers to dine at Hotel ICON.

As this vibrant and dynamic roster of student-led activities suggests, campus life at the SHTM is packed full of opportunities to excel beyond the walls of the classroom. **H**

## Above and Beyond

Two student organisations, the SHTM Event Society and The



Miss Winny Japardy (left) and Miss Lillian Li (right) accept Student Club of the Year Award 2020/21 on behalf of The Bacchus: SHTM Wine Society



Chef Heinz Fischer demonstrates Alaskan seafood preparation

# Eating Globally At Home

A global outlook has long been a hallmark of the SHTM's food and beverage (F&B) activities, and its 2021 calendar is no exception. In recent months, undaunted by COVID-19 travel restrictions, the School has devised exciting new ways to bring world cuisines home to Hong Kong.

This spring, the SHTM embraced the concept of "internationalisation at home" with a globe-spanning series of workshops led by world-class chefs and other culinary experts. Organised by the Food and Wine Academy, a joint initiative

with Hotel ICON, and delivered mostly online, the series celebrated the interconnectedness of food and tourism one bite – and one byte – at a time.

The first stop on this whirlwind gastronomic tour was Alaska. In an online workshop delivered by the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute on 8 March, the attendees were treated to a culinary demonstration by chef Heinz Fischer, showcasing sustainable and delicious Alaskan seafood such as snow crab and Pacific cod.

On 22 March, another online workshop explored France's agri-food model. Fruit and vegetables are a big part of France's gastronomic heritage, and demand is growing in Asia for French kiwis, carrots and, above all, apples. The participants discussed French cuisine live with the renowned chef Charles Soussin, who also demonstrated some healthy recipes.

26 March was a busy day for F&B enthusiasts. At lunchtime, an in-person workshop on "Dining Manners Around the World" was

held in Hotel ICON's Bistro 1979. Led by Dr Pearl Lin, SHTM Assistant Professor, students from the MSc in Global Hospitality Business described the quirks of international dining culture.

Later that afternoon, aspiring bakers enjoyed an online workshop delivered by Grégoire Michaud, award-winning pastry chef and founder of Bakehouse in Hong Kong. Chef Michaud shared his inspiring story of turning "flour, water and salt" into a sustainable and successful business model. "Baking good bread is very easy", he said, "but the recipe for success lies elsewhere".

On 16 April, attention turned from bread to wine, with a masterclass to celebrate World Malbec Day. Delivered by the acclaimed wine educator Jennifer Luk, this hybrid workshop took place both online and in the SHTM's Vinoteca Lab. All of the participants learned about Argentina's flagship grape variety, and those attending in person were lucky enough to taste a selection of Malbecs for themselves.

tourism will play a crucial role in rebuilding the industry in the post-pandemic era.

On 28 April, Dr Pearl Lin highlighted the importance of food to tourism in a lecture entitled "Food as a Universal Language in World Tourism", part of the PolyU & You: Online Lecture Series. This series, designed for secondary school students and teachers, is another example of the SHTM's support for internationalisation at home – or at the dinner-table!

"Food brings people from different cultures together", said Dr Lin. She asked her online audience to imagine themselves as gastronomic voyagers, circumnavigating the globe as they enjoyed a virtual meal. Their first course was fried chicken. Although known by different names ("buffalo wings" in the US, *chikin* in Korea and *karaage* in Japan), this dish is enjoyed by tourists the world over for its "crispy and crunchy taste".

The language of taste may be universal, but some dishes attract travellers for their unique history

city's food and drink scene will be an important way to win back tourists' loyalty in the wake of COVID-19.

## An Eye to the Future

On 10 March, in partnership with GREAT for a Sustainable Future, the British Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong brought together an expert panel to showcase the value of sustainable foods in Hong Kong and the UK. The SHTM is proud of its involvement with this cross-continent initiative, which is promoting greener food production for the benefit of people and the planet.

As we emerge from the pandemic, it has never been more important to join forces to work towards a brighter and more sustainable future. The SHTM's vibrant array of F&B activities reflects its commitment

## Taste and Tourism

On holiday, the experience of sampling local delicacies goes beyond taste. Through food, tourists also learn first hand about the culture of their destination. Little wonder that a third of tourist spending goes on sampling local cuisines. As the "bread and butter" of the travel industry, culinary

as well as their flavour. Thailand's *tom yum* soup was included on UNESCO's 2020 Intangible Cultural Heritage List. Just as iconic, said Dr Lin, is French onion soup, a firm favourite with visitors to France for centuries. Across the English Channel, the hearty Irish "shepherd's pie" conjures up images of comforting fireside evenings.

The final stop on this culinary world tour was Hong Kong, whose cuisine offers tourists a unique combination of Eastern and Western flavours. Promoting the

to providing opportunities for global engagement, both online and offline. **H**



The Food and Wine Academy

# Best of the Best



Despite the disruption caused by the pandemic, SHTM students have once again excelled academically, thanks to their hard work and determination. Undergraduates achieving an outstanding grade point average in the first semester of 2020/21 were commended in a virtual ceremony on 29 March 2021. Members of the SHTM Student Ambassador Scheme were also honoured as true role models exemplifying the values of the School.

Undaunted by the challenges they have faced, these students are certain to become exceptionally resilient and dedicated hospitality professionals. The School is proud to celebrate the truly inspiring achievements of its students in these unprecedented times and congratulates the following students on their well-deserved awards. **H**

## BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS) IN HOTEL MANAGEMENT

BOENARDI Regine  
 CHAN Yan Tung  
 CHEUNG Hiu Lam  
 CHOI Seohee  
 JAPARDY Winny Wira  
 JEONG Habin  
 KUMAROVA Kamshat  
 LAI Chi Lam  
 LAM Men Ka  
 LAU Sin Tung  
 LEE Yuet Yi Moon  
 LIU Shangshu  
 LIU Xuechen  
 LUI Hin Yung  
 NGAI Chi Sheung  
 RIETBERG Wiebe

SO Cheuk Yee  
 SO Shiu To Tobias  
 WONG Hei Ching  
 WONG Yat Ching  
 WU Amy  
 YU Chin Yan Beatrice  
 ZHU Yingxi

## BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS) IN TOURISM MANAGEMENT

CHAN Lian  
 LAI Tsz Mei  
 LIN Yuean  
 MA Nga Yan  
 RHEE Oso  
 TUNG Wing Tung  
 WANG Tzu-yin

# Role Models for Success

In an era of social distancing, forging connections is more important than ever. This is the mission of the SHTM's Mentorship Programme, which pairs student mentees with SHTM alumni and other industry leaders. Inspired and informed by their mentors, students can map out a vision of and mission for career success.

This year, 103 students were matched with 77 mentors. Kicking off the programme in style, the SHTM hosted an Outstanding SHTM Student Mentor & Mentee Award Presentation Ceremony cum Luncheon Meeting, which was delivered both in person and online.

Two back-to-back luncheons were held in Bistro 1979 before and after an award presentation ceremony, officiated by Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management. Also present were Dr Catherine Cheung, SHTM Associate Dean, Professor Brian King, SHTM Associate Dean, and Dr Eric Chan, SHTM Undergraduate Programme Director, along with 50 eager student mentees.

After welcoming the participants, Dean Chon presented the SHTM Outstanding Student Mentor of the Year Award 2020 to Ms Yvonne Ma, Managing Director of Eighty20 Marketing Agency. Thanking her mentee, Hotel Management student Ms Janna Lee, for the nomination, Ms Ma offered some invaluable advice in times of uncertainty. "Go the extra mile, never give up", she urged the student attendees. "Your biggest competitor is always yourself, and it is essential to find ways to go beyond your limits".

The Outstanding Student Mentee of the Year Award 2020 went to MSc student Mr Neil Zhang, who is studying International Wine Management. Speaking remotely, Mr Zhang thanked his mentor, Mr Nixon Chung, Managing Director of Camloy International Ltd, for imparting crucial insights into the industry. "My dream is to open a wine bar", said Mr Zhang, "and I am sure that will obtain a lot more precious guidance and advice from Mr Chung in the future". **H**

Outstanding SHTM Student Mentor & Mentee Award Presentation Ceremony

Ms Yvonne Ma (right)



Mr Neil Zhang



# 2021 Mentors

**AU Michael**  
Executive Director, Realty Travel Service Ltd.

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

**CHAN Angela**  
Human Resources Manager, Hong Kong Football Club

**CHAN Cyrina**  
Director of Human Resources, Marco Polo Hotels, Hong Kong

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

**CHAN Eddie**  
Director of Learning & Development, The Landmark Mandarin Oriental HK

**CHAN Edward**  
Human Resources Manager, Bishop Lei International House

**CHAN Purple**  
Residence Manager, Somerset Victoria Park HK and Hotel Purple

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

**CHAN Samuel**  
Senior Vice President, Genting Hong Kong Group

**CHAU Carie**  
Account Director – Global Sales, Marriott International

**CHENG Edward**  
Senior Manager – Corporate Development, Cyberport

**CHENG Paul**  
General Manager – Market & Connectivity Development, Airport Authority Hong Kong

**CHEUK Coco**  
Director of Business Development – Corporate (HK), Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts

**CHEUNG Christy**  
Group Human Resources and Administration Director, Butterfly Hospitality Group

**CHEUNG Nancy**  
Director, Horiental Solution Limited

**CHEUNG Janvier**  
Quality and Training Manager, Holiday Inn Golden Mile Hong Kong

**CHEUNG Ray**  
Group HR Manager – Talent Development, Nina Hospitality

**CHEUNG Ricky**  
Corporate Director- Talent & Culture, Rosewood Hotel Group

**CHUNG Nixon**  
Managing Director, Camloy International Ltd.

**DRUMMOND John**  
General Manager, InterContinental Grand Stanford Hong Kong

**FONG Jason**  
Learning Manager, Grand Hyatt Hong Kong

**FONG Mike**  
Learning & Development Manager, The Langham Hong Kong

**HANG Ronald**  
Director of Revenue Management, K11 ARTUS

**HO Alex**  
Assistant Director – Talent Development, Wharf Hotels

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

**JUNG Peter**  
Managing Director, Milton Exhibits Group Limited

**KO Byron**  
General Manager, Hong Kong Ocean Park Marriott Hotel

**KO Kevin**  
Assistant Front Office Manager, The Mira Hong Kong

**KONG Maurice**  
Assistant General Manager – Food & Beverage, New World Development

**KWOK Philip**  
Senior Human Resources Manager, Hong Kong Gold Coast Hotel

**KWONG Cherisa**  
Director of Revenue Management, New World Millennium Hong Kong Hotel

**KWONG Stan**  
Regional Head, Finnair

**LAM Michael**  
Duty Vice President – Asset Management (Hotel Division), Sun Hung Kai Properties Limited

**LAU David**  
Chief Executive Officer, Ocean Sky Hotel Management Limited

**LEE Angela**  
Director of Learning and Development, Langham Hospitality Group

**LEE Wilson**  
General Manager, Hyatt Regency Hong Kong, Shatin

**LEUNG Eric**  
Senior Manager – Passenger Sales & Marketing, All Nippon Airways

**LEUNG Paul**  
Managing Director, Holiday World Tours Ltd.

**LEUNG Maggie**  
Human Resources Manager, Hong Kong Ocean Park Marriott Hotel

**LI David**  
Senior Operations Manager, Maxim's Caterers Ltd.

**LI Johnny**  
Director of Human Resources, Harbour Grand Hong Kong

**LI Wallace**  
Head of Food & Beverage Operations (Racecourses & Special Projects), The Hong Kong Jockey Club

**LIU Vincent**  
Learning & Development Manager, Conrad Hong Kong

**MA Yvonne**  
Managing Director, Eighty20 Marketing & Public Relations Agency

**NG Eliza**  
Manager – Learning & Development, HKIA Services Holdings Ltd.

**NG Ringo**  
Director of Rooms, InterContinental Grand Stanford Hong Kong

**NGAI Gary**  
Director of Rooms, Holiday Inn Golden Mile

**PARK Patrick**  
Director of Front Office, Marco Polo Hongkong Hotel

**POON Ronald**  
Director of Talent Development, Rosewood Hong Kong

**SAWYER Martyn**  
Group Director – Properties, The HongKong and Shanghai Hotels Ltd.

**SHAM Signory**  
Director of Human Resources, The Hong Kong Country Club

**SLATER Rory**  
General Manager, The Hari Hong Kong

**TAI Frankie**  
Quality & Training Manager, The Hari Hong Kong

**TAI Stephen**  
Talent and Culture Manager, Rosewood Hotel Group Head Office

**TANG Benson**  
Executive Director – Corporate Travel, Informa Markets

**TANG Tom**  
Director of Operations, Lodgewood by Nina Hospitality

**TASOS Kousloglou**  
CEO – Hotel Division, Sun Hung Kai Properties Limited

**TCHOU Larry**  
Senior Advisor – Greater China, Hyatt Hotels Corporation

**TIU Cyrus**  
Group Director of Food & Beverage, Nina Hospitality

**TSANG Angela**  
Admin. & Human Resources Manager, Park Hotel International Ltd.

**TSANG Porsche**  
Director of Guest Experience, Island Shangri-La Hong Kong

**TSE Alan**  
Human Resources Manager, Hilton Garden Inn Hong Kong

**TSE Roni**  
Restaurant Manager, Harbour Grand H.K. Ltd.

**VAZQUEZ Eduardo**  
Senior Manager – Investments & Asset Management, Shangri-La Asia Ltd.

**WAI Kenneth**  
Assistant Vice President – Human Resources, Shangri-La International Hotel Management Ltd.

**WAI Yvonne**  
Learning and Development Manager, Sheraton and Four Points by Sheraton Hotel

**WANG Anvy**  
Sales & Marketing Manager, Silvermine Beach Resort Ltd.

**WONG Edi**  
Executive Director, Black Sheep Restaurants

**WONG Elaine**  
Senior Project Manager, Connexus Travel Limited

**WONG Jason, JP**  
Chairman, Travel Industry Council and General Manager, Sin Ma Tours Ltd.

**WONG Susanna**  
Assistant Vice President – Loyalty Operations, Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts

**YAU Edmund**  
Director of Front Office, Panda Hotel

**YEUNG Patricia**  
Assistant Director – Human Resources, McDonald's Hong Kong

**YIP Lawrence**  
Director & SVP North Asia, Millennium & Copthorne Hotels

**YU Philip**  
Vice President of Operation, Greater China, Hyatt Hotels Corporation

**YUEN Calvin**  
Corporate F&B Manager, Shangri-La Group

# Alum-notes

## 1980s

**Mr Kenneth Wai**  
**HD in Institutional Management and Catering Studies 1985** is Assistant Vice President, Human Resources at Shangri-La Group.

## 2000s

**Ms Donna Wong**  
**BA(Hons) in Hotel, Catering and Tourism Management 2003** is Regional Director of Sales, North Asia at Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group.

## 2010s

**Dr Alexander Grunewald**  
**Ph.D. in Hotel and Tourism Management 2010** is Managing Director at Accenture.

**Ms Sarah Wang**  
**Master of Philosophy 2010** is Regional Director – China at World Travel & Tourism Council.

**Ms Carol Lee**  
**BSc(Hons) in Tourism Management 2011** is Partnerships Lead (APAC) at Atom Learning.

**Mr Ronald Hang**  
**BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2012** is Director of Commercial Strategy at K11 ARTUS.

**Ms Pureanae Jang**  
**BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2013** is Associate Director, Valuation and Advisory Services, at Colliers International Hong Kong.

**Mr Freeman Fung**  
**BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2014** is Marketing Manager at Merlin Entertainments PLC.

**Mr Ben Lam**  
**BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2014** is Branch Manager, Bangkok International Dental Center.

**Ms Catherine Leung**  
**MSc in International Hospitality Management 2016** is Tourism and Hospitality Studies Panel Head at United Christian College (Kowloon East).

**Mr Kyu-baek Kim**  
**MSc in Global Hospitality Business 2016** is Acquisition & Development Manager at Ovolo Group Ltd.

**Ms Kristina Park**  
**MSc in Global Hospitality Business 2016** is Global Social Media and Media Content Manager at Shiji Group.

**Ms Jess Mak**  
**BSc(Hons) in Convention and Event Management 2016** is Senior Events Coordinator at Haymarket Media Group.

**Ms Yuki Chan**  
**BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2016** is Marketing Executive (yuu Rewards Club) at Dairy Farm Group.

**Ms Jennifer Klar**  
**MSc in Global Hospitality Business 2017** is Corporate Sustainability Manager at Six Senses Hotels Resorts Spas.

**Mr Matthew Kum**  
**BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2017** is Project and Account Manager at Palatino Hospitality.

**Mr Timmy Lee**  
**BSc(Hons) in Tourism Management 2017** is Administrative Officer, Department of Finance and Insurance at Lingnan University.

**Dr Anthony Kong**  
**Doctor of Hotel and Tourism Management 2018** is Assistant Professor at School of Design, PolyU.

**Ms Victoria Zhou**  
**MSc in Global Hospitality Business 2018** is Account Manager, Private Jets at Air Charter Service.

**Mr Bevis Lo**  
**BSc(Hons) in Convention and Event Management 2018** is Assistant Project Supervisor at Ocean Park Corporation.

**Ms Riley Tsai**  
**BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2018** is Operations Manager at The Continental.

**Mr Harry Ha**  
**BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2019** is Senior Analyst at Colliers International Hong Kong.

**Mr Lawrence Law**  
**BSc(Hons) in Tourism Management 2019** is Customer Service Officer at K11 MUSEA.

**Mr Rolland Mak**  
**BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2019** is Guest Relations Officer at K11 ARTUS.

**Mr Michael Ng**  
**BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2019** is Human Resources Assistant at Courtyard by Marriott Hong Kong Sha Tin.

**Dr Marco Liu**  
**Doctor of Hotel and Tourism Management 2020** is Chairman, Hong Kong Asia Cultural Dissemination Company.

**Ms Aiko Lau**  
**BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2020** is Sales Executive at Horizon Hotel & Suites Limited.

**Mr Steven Lee**  
**BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2020** is Reservations Officer at K11 ARTUS.

**Ms Chloe Wong**  
**BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2020** is Medical Receptionist at Dr. Lauren Bramley & Partners.

# Professors for a Day

The School is truly grateful for the generosity and wisdom of the outstanding industry professionals who recently served as professors for a day.

Speaker	Title and Company	Topic
Ms Alice AU	Director of Digital Marketing, Wharf Hotels Management Ltd	Digital Marketing in Hotels
Mr Federico BOGNA	Chairman, Hong Kong Forum of Responsible Drinking	Are you FReD-Sponsible?
Ms Diana CHAN	Project and Development Manager, Planet For All Hong Kong	Responsible Food Choice
Ms Loraine CHAN	Event Manager, Ocean Park Hong Kong	Challenges in Developing and Managing Ocean Park Events
Ms Cecilia CHENG	Associate Account Director, EternityX.com	Digital Marketing Trends - Vendors' Perspective
Ms Cindy CHENG	Founder and Consultant, SoTi Consulting	Ultra-Luxury Service
Mr Angelo CHEUNG	Co-Founder, Planet For All Hong Kong	Responsible Food Choice
Mr Ricky CHEUNG	Corporate Director, Talent & Culture, Rosewood Hotel Group	Digital Marketing and Transformation - Case of Rosewood
Mr Calvin CHOI	Chairperson, Hong Kong Wing Judge Association & Sommelier of AMELIA	Judgement of Paris: The Winning World and How Restaurants Select Wines
Ms Dora CHOI	Co-Founder, Planet For All Hong Kong	Responsible Food Choice
Mr Vallois CHOI	Director of Digital Marketing Strategy, Hotel ICON	Digital Marketing Hacks to Boost Business Results
Mr Joseph CHONG	Regional Vice-President, The Peninsula Hotels	Service Culture and Service Standard at The Peninsula Hotels
Chef Heinz FISCHER	Owner, HeinzFischer & Associates Pastry	Alaska Seafood Cooking Demonstration
Mr Yong GAN	General Manager, Howard Johnson Resort Guilin	Service Design
Dr Susan GORDON	Assistant Professor, School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Purdue University	Human Resource Management in the Foodservice Industry
Mr Tim HANNI	CEO, Wine Business Education	Birth of the New Wine Consumers
Mr Alex HO	Assistant Director, Talent Development, Wharf Hotels Management Ltd	The Sought-after Talent in Asia Pacific
Dr Tim Ming-Feng HUANG	Lecturer, Surrey International Institute, Dongbei University of Finance & Economics	Leisure Management in China
Mr Thomas HUNG	CEO, Storellet	Storellet's Business Model and Challenges in Customer Relationship Management during the Pandemic
Mr Syed Asim HUSSAIN	Co-Founder, Black Sheep Restaurants	The Philosophy and Prospects of F&B Business
Mr Jascha JIANG	Senior Revenue Manager, Hong Kong Revenue Cluster, Marriott International Inc	Strategic Pricing
Ms Jing JIN	Marketing Manager, Delicato Family Wines	Soft Skills in Project Management
Ms Karen KANG	Assistant Vice President, Marketing (Hong Kong), Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts	Marketing Management in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry
Ms Mariana LAM	Founder & CEO, WineWorld Xplorer	The Trend and the Future of Wine Marketing
Mr David LAU	General Manager, Popway Hotel	Service Culture and Standards in Asia
Ms Donna LEE	Director of Rooms, The Peninsula Hong Kong	Rooms Division Service Excellence Strategy
Ms Michelle LEE	CEO & Founder of Crescent, Legend Entertainment Limited	Events Management Insights from a Gen Y Entrepreneur
Ms Petty LEE	Project Manager, Green Ladies & Green Little, St. James Settlement	Responsible Shopping
Mr Toby LEE	Vice President, International Live Event Association, Hong Kong Chapter	E-Sport Development
Mr Larry LEUNG	Vice President, Site-in-charge of 11 Skies, K11 Concepts Limited	Destination within a Destination
Mr Samson LI	Chief Executive Officer, Grobest Holding Limited	The Future of Food by GREAT for a Sustainable Future Series
Ms Charmaine LIN	General Manager, Client Services, Gusto Luxe	Capturing China's Next Generation of Luxury Consumers with Digital Media
Mr Colin LIN	Senior Vice President of Development - China, Marriott International Inc	Growth Strategies of International Hotel Firms
Ms Min LIU	Managing Director, Clearwater Communications	Key Factors to Organizing Successful Conventions
Ms Winnie LOK	Director of Sales, Hotel ICON	Hotel Distribution Channel Strategies during the COVID-19 Pandemic
Ms Enid LOW	Chief Strategy Officer, AsiaWorld-Expo Management Limited	Building Competitive Advantages - How AsiaWorld-Expo is Responding to the Challenges of COVID-19
Ms Jennifer LUK	Wine Educator and Wine Judge for Argentina Wine Awards 2016	Malbec World Day
Ms Bella MA	Sommelier, TIRPSE	Judgement of Paris: The Winning World and How Restaurants Select Wines
Ms Nitjaree MANEERAT	PhD Candidate, Purdue University	Nutrition and Food Safety in the Foodservice Industry
Mr Christopher MARK	Co-Founder, Black Sheep Restaurants	The Philosophy and Prospects of F&B Business
Mr Gregoire MICHAUD	Pastry Chef and Founder, Bakehouse	How to Turn "Flour, Water, and Salt" into a Sustainable and Successful Business Model?
Dr Cristina MICHELINI	Chief Operating Officer APAC, Livin Farms	Experiences Working at a Startup
Ms Michele MITSCHIENER	Assistant Vice President, Product Development, Marketing, Genting Cruise Lines	Product Development Concepts and Enrichment Activations under COVID-19
Ms Daphne MOK	In-charge, University & College YMCA Department, Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong	Leisure and Recreation Policy Planning and Development in Hong Kong
Prof Chris MULLER	Courtesy Professor, FIU Chaplin School of Hospitality & Tourism Management	Changes in Multi-Unit Restaurant Operations: Pre and Post COVID-19
Ms Carmen NG	Director of Sustainability, Langham Hospitality Group	Hotel Environmental Management: Challenges & Opportunities
Ms Ivy NG	Bourgogne Wine Ambassador, Bourgogne Wine Board	Bourgogne Wines: Discovering of Bourgogne Wine Styles
Mr Deepak OHRI	Chief Executive Officer, Iebua Hotels & Resorts	Asia - The Next Luxury Hospitality Leader
Mr Manuel PALACIO	CEO & Co-Founder, Pirata Group Restaurants	An Overview of Multi-Unit Restaurant Management - A Case Study of the Pirata Group
Mr Herve PENNEQUIN	Head of Business Development, L'Imperatrice	Global Wine Trade Trends in the New Covid Era
Ms Kriya PILLAY	Founder and Managing Director, The Simplicity Foundry	Innovative Change Management
Mr Eric POON	Director of Sales & Marketing, The Peninsula Hong Kong	Creating Demand for Hyper Curated Experiences
Ms Gianca POON	Account Executive, EternityX.com	Digital Marketing Trends - Vendors' Perspective
Ms Nicole SANTOS	Founder, School of Port	The Introduction to Port
Mr Timothee SEMELIN	Senior Corporate Director of Digital Marketing and Transformation, Rosewood Hotel Group	Digital Marketing and Transformation - Case of Rosewood
Ms Pavithra SENEVIRATHNE	Assistant Captain, HENRY, Rosewood Hong Kong	Pavithra Senevirathne's Career Journey and Career Advice to Future Leaders
Ms Holly SMITH	Global Business Development Manager, Paramount 21	The Future of Food by GREAT for a Sustainable Future Series
Chef Charles SOUSSIN	Executive Chef and Chef Consultant, French Association "INTERFEL"	Evolution of French Cuisine
Mrs Heidi Yu SPURRELL	CEO, Food Made Good Hong Kong	Sustainability in a Multiple Restaurants Setting
		The Future of Food by GREAT for a Sustainable Future Series

Speaker	Title and Company	Topic
Dr Simon SU	Founder & Managing Director, ASA Projects Limited	How to Become a Successful Management Consultant?
Ms Winnie TAM	Assistant Director of Human Capital, Hotel ICON	Human Resources Management under COVID-19 Pandemic
Mr Loic THOMAS	Director of Food & Beverage, The Peninsula Hong Kong	Being a F&B Leader in a Time of Crisis and Disruption
Mr Kevin TSANG	Hotel Manager, The Peninsula Hong Kong	The Peninsula DNA
Ms Sonia TSANG	Project Manager, Upcycling Centre, St. James Settlement	Responsible Shopping
Mr James TUNG	Vice President, Travel Trade Development, K11 Concepts Limited	Destination within a Destination
Mr Pat WOO	Partner, Head of Sustainable Finance, KPMG	The Future of Food by GREAT for a Sustainable Future Series
Mr Yanping XI	CEO, Igo Hotel & Wine International and China Famous Hotels Corporation	Wine as Business and Culture
Ms Jingyi XU	Lecturer, Meituan Dianping Food & Beverage Academy	IT Empowered Restaurants Business
Mr Yong XUE	Training Manager, Huazhi Wine Company	Wine Business and Market in Mainland China
Dr Margie YANG	Chairman, Esquel Group	Power of Positive Thinking during the Turbulent Time
Mr Kenneth YAU	Assistant Vice President, Business Development, Genting Cruise Lines	Cruise & MICE
Mr David YEUNG	Founder, Green Monday	The Future of Food by GREAT for a Sustainable Future Series
Ms Dianna YU	People Culture and Development Manager, Swire Hotels Group	Contemporary Training Practices in Hospitality Industry
Mr Calvin YUEN	Manager, Corporate Food & Beverage, Shangri-La International Hotel Management Ltd	Calvin Yuen's Career Journey and Career Advice to Future Leaders

## Upcoming Events

# 2022

**7-8 January**

Event: 27th Annual Graduate Education & Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality & Tourism  
Organisers: SHTM and Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management, University of Houston  
Website: <https://www.gradconfht.com>

## 12 June

Event: SHTM Alumni Homecoming  
Organiser: SHTM

**12-14 June**

Event: 5th Global Tourism and Hospitality Conference  
Organiser: SHTM

**15-16 June**

Event: International Forum on Service Design for Hospitality and Tourism  
Organisers: SHTM and School of Design, PolyU

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

**Dr Daisy Fan**  
(Ph.D. 2016)  
Senior Lecturer  
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 2021, placed No. 1 globally in the "Commerce, Management, Tourism and Services" category in the University Ranking by Academic Performance in 2020/2021, rated No. 1 in the world in the "Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism" subject area by the CWUR Rankings by Subject 2017, and ranked No. 1 in Asia in the "Hospitality and Leisure Management" subject area in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2021, the SHTM ensured that we would gain international recognition for the calibre of our learning. Over the years, we've put the knowledge and skills we gained into practice as proud professionals in the hotel, travel and tourism fields. The cosmopolitan mix of our classes - with participants hailing from Denmark, Hong Kong, Korea, mainland China, Peru, Romania and the USA - is further testament to the SHTM's well-earned international reputation.

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

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

You too can be recognised!

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