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MEGATRENDS DOMINATE HOTEL INDUSTRY THINK TANK
Hotel of Tomorrow team Intercepts Trends, Creates Solutions

CHICAGO (July 14, 2006) — Future hotels will be multi-functional and intelligent, combining imagination with efficiency. Global future guests will choose and create experiences reflecting their personal preferences and aspirations in green and flexible buildings.

So believes an exclusive and diverse think tank called the Hotel of Tomorrow Project (H.O.T.), which is envisioning the future of hotels and their guests.

Participants in the project gathered for a dynamic group ideation session in New York City, led by strategic thinking guru Dave Norton, conceived by interior design firm The Gettys Group (Gettys) and Hospitality Design magazine with strategic input from Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide and forty other leading companies. The one hundred attendees were challenged to consider the world, the industry and their business models in light of the ten most pressing global trends: Automation, The Experience Economy, Ubiquitous Computing, Nanotechnology, Personalization, World Flattening, Biotechnology, Reinvented Retail, Modularity, and Renewable Resources. By focusing on “megatrends”, and the anticipated needs of six forecasted future demand groups; Aging Population, NeoEnvironmentalists, Escapists/Leisure Guests, Wellness Seekers, Business Travelers, and Today’s Teens, the participants in the aptly named “Big Think” conjured ideas predicted to shape the future of the hospitality industry.

The groundbreaking H.O.T. project, conceptualized in 2005 by Gettys principal Ron Swidler, was conceived as a vehicle for innovation through collaboration.

“We hope our approach will provide a catalyst for others to look beyond their own resources for solutions to the complex challenges facing our industry and world today. With the accelerating rate of change affecting our daily lives, gathering, sharing and creating new knowledge may be our most effective defense against obsolescence”, says Swidler. “By creating a forum for dialogue now, we are preparing ourselves to meet the challenges of tomorrow head-on.”

“Our group has discovered fascinating trend-blending while acting as design anthropologists for this initiative. Our list of megatrends are reflective of today’s world and will continue to change as the world around us changes,” says Swidler, who along with Matt Phillips, President of Phillips+Co., developed the list of megatrends.

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The megatrends, as the name of the ideation session suggests, are categories of enormous implication. The resounding theme is how advances in the sciences are and could affect humans and our environment. The entire hotel experience is likely to change as will the way guests pay for use of the facilities. The project has forced its participants; owner/developers, architects, designers, project managers, consultants, manufacturers, and others to conceive ideas around hotel furnishings, fixtures and fixtures might work in tomorrow's hotel and what that physical environment might be to support those systems and uses.

Megatrends Dominate/Add One

There is a sense of the fantastic when thinking about the future needs of travelers and how they might change as a result of nano- and biotechnology. Yet, as Swidler notes, it is imperative to intercept tomorrow's issues now.

In its' first year, the H.O.T. Project generated concepts that were prototyped as a bathroom that doubles as a completely immersive, experiential spa; a living wall creating sustainable and renewable in-room energy; and mobile, wireless self-contained in-room work pods that fold up when not in use.

H.O.T. is a collaborative think tank, comprised of America's top companies, and creates ideas based on apparent and imminent issues to conceive the future of hotels and resorts. The H.O.T. concepts and prototypes are to be unveiled at HD Boutique Conference in Miami on Sept. 18.

About Gettys

Established in 1988, Gettys is an award-winning interior design, architecture, and fulfillment firm based in Chicago. Work across North America and the Caribbean has earned Gettys a reputation as one of the finest hospitality design and fulfillment firms in the world. For more information about Gettys and a sampling of their extensive portfolio, visit www.gettys.com.

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