

Hotel Business

VOLUME 26 NO. 21 DECEMBER 15, 2017

HOTELBUSINESS.COM

Ten to Watch

With Cambria's growth exploding, Janis Cannon is a top choice

Who else did we choose?

Take Five

This handful of up & comers are on the path to success

Best Practices

BW's conference coverage

UNWRAP THE GIFT OF
Ultimate Comfort

The Most Comfortable and Durable SOFA BED SYSTEM in the World



COZY
MATTRESS
Modern Sofa Bed System

Hotel Business®

HOTELBUSINESS.COM

INSIDE

■ **Moxy Hotels** is taking a bite out of the Big Apple. The nascent hotel brand has opened in NYC's Times Square. **page 12**

■ **Do you know the best way** to talk to guests and staff about bed bugs? The experts share their tips on navigating this hotel headache. **page 14**

■ **Curio Collection by Hilton** is using creativity and science to uncover why people travel—and what their best hotel fit is. **page 24**

■ **The Citizen Hotel** has taken the local trend into the guestroom with a beverage option that gives guests a taste of Sacramento's hometown breweries. **page 26**

■ **Westin Hotels & Resorts** has partnered with TRX to give its guests the demanding workouts they crave. **page 46**



Al Primm/Exec News

President/CEO David Kong details Best Western's achievements and plans.

The Cordish Cos. to debut Live! flagship

By Stefani C. O'Connor
Executive News Editor

HANOVER, MD—With more than a century of real estate development behind it, The Cordish Companies at any one point in its history has had a global choice in where it wants to do its next project. This time around, however, its own backyard here in Anne Arundel County has turned into the ideal location to launch the first-ever Live! Hotel.

The company, chaired by David Cordish, recently topped off what will be the brand's flagship, a 17-story, 810-room luxury hotel adjacent its Live! Casino at Arundel Mills and proximate its 250-unit Live! Lofts accommodations.

The tower structure will include an event center with 1,500-seat concert venue, meeting space and ballroom, several dining options, and a spa and salon, adding an aggregate 350,000 sq. ft. of space to the state's already largest gaming operation.

Owned under PPE Casino Resorts Maryland LLC, (doing business as Maryland Live! Casino), the property will be managed by a division of The Cordish Companies.

If the Live! moniker seems familiar, *continued on page 50*

HB ON THE SCENE

Best Western pushes HQ hotel, experiences

By Stefani C. O'Connor
Executive News Editor

NASHVILLE—While the setting was here in Music City for its annual convention, there was nothing honky-tonk about Best Western Hotels & Resorts' strategies for the coming months, presented to some 2,600 attendees last month at the Gaylord Opryland Hotel.

"Best Western is doing well," President/CEO David Kong told the crowd. "But we also need to be careful that we don't fall into the trap of complacency and lull ourselves into thinking our future will take care of itself. Our future depends on our imagination, and our continued motivation and passion. In a world where everything

continued on page 8

the stat corner

U.S. Hotel Industry at a Glance

October 2017



Sponsored by



Powered by



Customization **Made in USA** **Durability** **Fast Delivery**

If your bed sheets aren't Thomaston, THEN THEY'RE JUST IMPORTS.

Simply put, Thomaston Mills is the largest and highest quality bed sheet mill in the USA. Our products are finished with high environmental standards and made by the most experienced team in the institutional linen business in Thomaston, GA. Learn more about our customization capabilities, delivery options, and unparalleled



EXPERIENCE EXTRAORDINARY HOTELS

One of the world's largest and most dynamic hotel companies, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group offers world-class hospitality to each and every guest.

With an expanding portfolio of over 1,400 hotels in operation and under development, our locations cover 115 countries and territories and a powerful set of global brands: Quorvus Collection, Radisson Blu®, Radisson®, Radisson RED, Park Plaza®, Park Inn® by Radisson and Country Inns & Suites By Carlson™.

With an array of vibrant hotels, in some of the world's most desirable and exciting locations, our wealth of expertise across all key segments and business models means we understand – and meet – the wants and needs of our partners. Open, trustful relationships are key to our culture and drive our dynamic growth.

Discover more about our brands
carlsonrezidor.com



John M. Kidd

Carlson Hotels

By Stefani C. O'Connor
Executive News Editor

Having the top spot at a hotel chain undergoing change, particularly one that's a decades-old, formerly privately held family firm whose founding patriarch's name still defines the company's identity, is likely not the easiest place to be. But that's just where John M. Kidd finds himself some seven months after being named CEO/COO of Carlson Hotels.

The Minnetonka, MN-based company, parent to such well-known brands as Radisson, Radisson Red, Radisson Blu, Country Inns & Suites, Park Inn by Radisson, Park Plaza and Quorvus Collection, was acquired last year by China-based HINA Hospitality Group, where Kidd served as president/COO.

"With any merger or acquisition, there will be a transition phase that is fraught with change. One would expect and anticipate that the change is for the good of the organization, and that is proving to be the case for Carlson Hotels," said the CEO. "HINA truly recognized we were a world-class organization with an entrepreneurial spirit from our deep roots as a family-owned hospitality company. This prestigious platform the company was built on had tremendous value in the marketplace. Now what we are doing is taking that value to the next level. That has required us to look diagnostically at all aspects of the business and compare ourselves with our main competitors we see in the industry."

Kidd is the third executive to occupy the C-suite since Carlson Hotels was acquired. Initially, incumbent CEO David Berg was slated to remain in place; however, he was replaced this past January by Federico González Tejera. Tejera resigned a few months later to become president/CEO of Rezidor Hotel Group, the Brussels-based master franchisor of Carlson Hotels outside of the United States.

Kidd indicated the overall plan for the chain is to become a high-profile player. "Our vision is to become one of the top-three hotel companies in the world

and the hotel company of choice for guests, owners and talent," he said. "To accomplish this, we have developed a holistic five-year plan, which we call Destination 2022. This plan covers operations and asset management, brands and products, commercial and IT areas, talent and culture. I am confident this plan will propel [our] success."

After 20 years with Hilton, Kidd spent five years with HINA in Beijing with several "terrific assignments," most recently spending 10 months in French Polynesia where he put together a common platform for HINA's hotels, airlines and travel agencies, before being tapped for the CEO post.

"The candid truth is when I assumed this new role, the company was not performing as well as it could be. The way we ran our business was inconsistent with how the world's greatest hotel companies operate," Kidd acknowledged. "We are now building something new and are guided by our strategic five-year plan... We are going to put our hotels first, simplify how we work and be better financial stewards... We are building a new hotel business, organized and operated in the manner of the very best global hotel companies. This is a fresh start on our operating model—how we think, plan and work."

On his watch, plans are to be "very aggressive" in going after large U.S. markets (Top 15) for its Radisson Blu and Radisson Red brands and to swiftly tighten up the consistency and quality of the core Radisson brand. "We also consider Park Inn by Radisson a 'hidden gem' for our portfolio in the Americas," said Kidd. "This brand presents an opportunity for significant growth like our European prototype that has been so successful."

Also on tap is accelerating the transformation of Country Inns & Suites to a Gen 4 product, which has proven successful, based on owner validation and increases in ADR and NPS, according to the company. "We strongly believe our Country Inns & Suites portfolio can be three to four times larger than it is today," said the CEO.

Purely organic growth and an asset-light strategy in the Americas with



select managed contracts (when it make sense) will be the order of the new day. An aggressive development approach also is on the agenda.

On his personal agenda, Kidd enjoys sharing quality time at home on the weekends with his wife, entertaining family and friends. "I have particularly enjoyed American football since I was in high school in California, as well as watching the mighty All Blacks rugby team of my home country, New Zealand. I also enjoy researching assorted topics—usually related to business—and in between, trying to fit in a session or two in the gym, although the latter activity is sadly sometimes difficult to maintain consistently," said Kidd.

As its new leader, the CEO said he understands the reason Carlson Hotels is a great company is due to its legacy of outstanding family entrepreneurship.

"So it's now important I reassure the whole team that the change experienced during this transition period is essential for us to achieve our long-term goals, and furthermore, the new knowledge and skills—and fun—we will acquire along the way will be worth attaining," he said. **HB**

"Twenty-five years ago, I was the group general manager of the City Division hotels of a stock-exchange-listed hotel company in Johannesburg, South Africa."

