



Hospitality Stream

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The economics of branded residences: Sales versus service

Moderator: Peter Sugden, consultant, Clyde & Co

Panellists:

- Stefano Saporetti, Director of brand diversification, Aston Martin
- Marine Duchesne, Vice president of development for Europe, Ennismore
- Ed Blake, Company director, Clivedale London

The discussion focused on the economic benefits and value proposition of branded residences, particularly in the context of luxury real estate. Ed highlighted that branded residences offer a unique selling point through hospitality partners, enhancing sales value and velocity. Marine emphasised the importance of post-completion service and brand recognition, noting that branded residences can command higher prices and faster sales. Stefano discussed the strategic alignment of location and brand, suggesting that mid-scale branded residences can be successful if managed efficiently. Aston Martin's entry into branded residences was justified by its luxury brand positioning and the potential for cross-promotion with its car sales.

Key takeaways:

- Opportunities for Hoxton branded residences in the UK market.
- Potential for branded residence projects in Cornwall and Edinburgh.

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Scaling lifestyle brands

Moderator: Eloise Hanson, editor - hospitality, International Hospitality Media

Expert speakers:

- Alexander Goad, CEO, The July
- Lauren Okada-Young, Managing director - investments, real estate, Brookfield

The session focused on scaling lifestyle brands, particularly in the hospitality sector. Lauren from Brookfield discussed their investments in student housing, hospitality, and lifestyle operators like edyn and Generator. Alex from The July shared their growth strategy, emphasising the importance of financial discipline and forecasting. They highlighted the need for unique experiences and the impact of capital structure on growth pace. The discussion also covered the evaluation of lifestyle brands, the importance of ancillary spend, and the challenges of scaling consistent experiences across different locations.

Key takeaways:

- Opportunities for scaling the lifestyle brand across European capitals, focusing on well-connected, up-and-coming areas.
- Investment considerations include profitability, revenue per available room, and maximising the highest and best use of the asset.
- Feasibility and potential benefits of owning the freehold of properties versus leasing in order to optimise the growth strategy.

Demand Trends

Presenter: Ryan Bains, account director STR

Ryan, an account director at STR, presented on the global hotel data benchmarking and analytics. Despite macroeconomic challenges and geopolitical volatility, the industry is selling more rooms year-over-year, with a 1% year-to-date growth in Europe and a 2% ADR growth globally. North America saw a 0.4% US growth and a 4% Canadian growth. The UK and Ireland recovered first, while Germany faced challenges. Luxury hotels are performing well, while economy hotels are struggling. American travellers are increasingly heading abroad, with a 3.6% decrease in foreign arrivals in the US. The forecast for 2028-2029 is positive, driven by major events and strong mid-week demand.

View Ryan's presentation here: [Urban Living Festival 2025](#)

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Sustainability in business travel

Moderator: Matthew Parsons, Founder, Etude Agency

Panellists:

- Ufi Ibrahim, CEO, Energy & Environment Alliance
- Dimitrios Buhalis, Professor, Bournemouth University
- Jessica Matthias, Travel Sustainability Expert

The panel discussed the complexities of sustainability in the travel industry, particularly in the U.S. Jess highlighted the conflicting government policies on ESG initiatives, emphasising corporate resilience. Ufi stressed the importance of data-driven sustainability for investors, noting the need for auditable data. Dimitrios from Bournemouth University focused on smart systems for measuring and improving sustainability. The discussion also covered the rise in business travel spending, the challenges of integrating sustainable options into corporate policies, and the role of financial markets in driving sustainability initiatives. The panel agreed on the need for practical, measurable sustainability efforts.

Key takeaways:

- Use case for developing an ESG receipt that provides audited data on carbon, water, and waste for hotel stays.
- Ways to optimise resource consumption in tourism and travel operations, such as adjusting air conditioning settings and reducing food waste.
- Need to engage with corporate travel clients to understand their evolving data and reporting requirements around sustainability.

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