

Speaker Listings

Programme Speakers



Peter Hancock
Conference
& Awards Host

Peter Hancock is a professional conference and awards host, after-dinner speaker and toastmaster. He recently retired after 21 years as Chief Executive at Pride of Britain Hotels, was previously Group Publishing Director of Johansens and was a hotel GM in his early career. Peter is currently an ambassador for James Hallam (insurance), Hospitality Action, The Gold Service Scholarship and the Independent Hotel Show. He is also a Master Innholder, a Fellow of the Institute of Hospitality, a HOSPA Fellow and Chair of the Quality Advisory Board for Visit England and the AA.



Harry Murray
MBE MI FIH
HOSPA President

Distinguished Hotelier Harry Murray MBE was elected President of HOSPA in 2018 as it entered a key period of attracting British talent into the hospitality industry. His election was based on his prominence in the industry, his reputation and previous involvement with HOSPA. Harry has managed luxury hotels across five decades and has been recognised with numerous awards for his tireless efforts to raise standards of excellence. His awards include an MBE for services to the hospitality industry, Hotelier of the Year, Catey Lifetime Achievement Award, AA Lifetime Achievement Award and an Honorary Doctorate of the University of Essex.



Jane Pendlebury
CEO, HOSPA

Jane Pendlebury is CEO of HOSPA. Initially, Jane was a HOSPA member and sponsor. Then, after volunteering her time assisting with HOSPACE, she was taken on to run the Membership and Events office before being promoted to CEO in 2016. Kickstarting her career with a degree in hotel management, Jane worked with both chain and independent hotels. Thereafter, she spent many years assisting hotels and restaurants with their technology

decisions around Property Management, Point of Sale and Revenue Management. This culminated into a role as VP and General Manager covering Europe for a global hospitality software house.



Mark Edwards,
Partner, BDO LLP

Mark is a partner in the Consumer Markets sector in London and has spent 21 years specialising in advising businesses in the hospitality sector. Mark has extensive experience with family businesses, PE-backed entities and large, international listed businesses. Mark gained commercial experience when appointed interim FD at an international wholesale business in the retail sector. His recent client experience includes Dorchester Collection, Rocco Forte Hotels, Hoxton Hotels, Hyatt Regency London – The Churchill, Drake & Morgan, Shepherd Neame and Admiral Taverns.



Michael Grove,
CEO, HotStats

Michael is CEO of HotStats which provide monthly P&L benchmarking and market insight for the hotel industry. Collecting monthly detailed financial data from hotels worldwide from over 100 brands and independent hotels, HotStats provide over 550 different KPIs covering all operating revenues, payroll, expenses, cost of sales and ultimately departmental and total hotel profitability. Prior to joining HotStats, Michael held multiple operational and financial roles at hotel and corporate level over 16 years and is a regular guest lecturer at universities and hotel schools around the world.



Peter Heath,
Founder,
Venue Performance

Peter is the founder and creator of Venue Performance, the Meetings & Events benchmarking platform for hotels and events venues. Peter has spent nearly 30 years working in the meetings and events industry and has grown Venue Performance to be the only M&E benchmarking platform in the world. Over 400 UK hotels and properties contribute to VP, including major hotel brands, operators and conference venues.



Thomas Pugh,
Economist, RSM UK

Thomas Pugh is a UK economist with a wealth of experience in analysing the key economic events in the UK and around the world. He provides insightful and accessible commentary on how these events affect businesses in the real economy in the UK. He works closely with RSM's global economics team to give a comprehensive overview of the economic issues that middle market business leaders need to be aware of. Thomas is regularly quoted and interviewed by the UK's financial media and frequently presents his thoughts and insights on the UK economy to businesses and conferences around the country and internationally.



Kate Nicholls OBE,
CEO, UKHospitality

Kate Nicholls OBE has been CEO of UKHospitality, the powerful voice representing the broad hospitality sector, since its inception in 2018. She previously worked as CEO and Strategic Affairs Director of the Association of Licenced Multiple Retailers (ALMR) and chaired the Tourism Alliance, London Night-time Commission and London Tourism Recovery Board. Kate sits on the Government's Tourism, Hospitality, and Food & Drink Sector Councils, where she represents the wider hospitality and tourism sector. As a passionate advocate for inclusivity in hospitality, Kate is also the Government's first Disability Ambassador for hospitality, the Chair of the Institute of Licensing, a board member of Best Bar None, and a trustee of Hospitality Action and Springboard.



James Stagg,
Editor, The Caterer

James Stagg is editor of The Caterer, leading the hospitality brand's content and its prestigious portfolio of events, including The Cateys, Caterer Summits, Acorn Awards and Best Places to Work in Hospitality. James joined The Caterer in 2010, then leading a team of journalists reporting across hotels, restaurants, contract catering, pubs and bars as content editor. He was appointed deputy editor in 2015 after the title's acquisition

by Jacobs Media from RBI. James worked alongside the editor to relaunch The Caterer's website and digital subscription offer, creating The Caterer Insight market trend reports accompanied by new training events.



Jason Simpson,
CEO, RAW Charging

As CEO of RAW Charging, Jason Simpson drives the company's mission to deliver top-tier EV charging solutions for the leisure and hospitality industries. With a background in luxury travel, under Jason's leadership, RAW Charging has partnered with prominent names such as Merlin Entertainments, National Trust, Exclusive Hotels and McArthurGlen designer outlets to provide seamless, sustainable charging experiences that elevate guest experience and satisfaction. In a former life Jason was a GM of a Small Luxury Hotels property in Morocco and has spent an enormous amount of time in and around luxury hotels with his former partner who is a travel writer and author.



Sally Beck,
General Manager,
Royal Lancaster London

Sally Beck is the General Manager of the Royal Lancaster London. At the helm since 2013, Sally is responsible for leading one of London's largest independent hotels, the Royal Lancaster has 411 bedrooms, three restaurants and bars and some of the largest banqueting space in Europe. Believing that a happy team makes happy guests and happy owners, team and guest engagement is Sally's first priority. The team are also passionate about giving back to the community and about the hotel's commitment to social responsibility. They support various charities and work closely with The Clink Charity, Springboard and Hospitality Action.



Adam Terpening FIH,
Charity Director,
Room to Reward

With over 30 years' experience in the hotel industry, Adam has held senior management roles within Harbour Hotels, Macdonald Hotels and Forte Hotels and is a Fellow of the Institute of Hospitality. Following his retirement at Harbour, Adam – at the instigation of the charity's founder, Nicolas Roach – set up Room to Reward in 2015 and has been overseeing the charity ever since.

Over 900 hotels have joined the Room to Reward journey, donating over 3,000 breaks in rooms that would otherwise sit empty to inspirational volunteers nominated by over 1,000 charities, community groups, grassroots sports clubs and other voluntary organisations.



Guy Barnes,
Head of Sales Europe,
Sabre Hospitality

Guy Barnes leads the Sabre Hospitality sales team for Europe and is passionate about helping hotels generate more revenues through innovative ecommerce and distribution technologies. A commercial leader with 25+ years of experience in driving revenue performance, he is used to dealing with complex challenges and working with senior stakeholders as an advisor to develop revenue opportunities. Guy previously spent 18 years with IDEaS managing strategic relationships and leading new sales for enterprise hotel groups in EMEA, and latterly airport parking globally. Prior to joining IDEaS, he held a number of corporate revenue management positions with Forte and then Macdonald Hotels.



Jane Grammer,
Belonging & Employee
Wellbeing Manager,
Dorchester Collection

Jane has almost 10 years' experience working strategically with corporate organisations and Fortune 500 companies across a range of industries to embed best practices for diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). As a DEI expert with a speciality in values-based eLearning, Jane has designed award-winning training campaigns for lasting behavioural change. At Dorchester Collection she is leading the global Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (DIB) strategy, spearheading initiatives to ensure diverse representation across all levels of the business and creating equitable work environments where diverse groups can thrive and succeed. The DIB strategy is one component of the wider ESG strategy to become carbon net-zero by 2050.



Gina Knight,
Head of People,
Flat Iron Steak

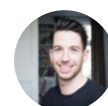
With over 15 years in hospitality, Gina began in hotel operations before advancing into Learning and

Development, Talent and full People Strategy. Now Head of People at Flat Iron Steak, Gina leads a Times Best Place to Work 2024 culture, supporting team happiness, belonging and a three-star sustainability rating – key to Flat Iron's ESG goals as it strives to be a force for good. Currently pursuing her coaching accreditation and mentoring with Be Inclusive Hospitality, Gina's neurodiversity experience fuels her passion for inclusivity, growth and empowerment.



Lorraine Copes,
Founder and CEO,
Be Inclusive Hospitality

Lorraine Copes is a multi-award-winning social entrepreneur, board member, writer and life coach. After two decades as an executive director for renowned brands, she founded Be Inclusive Hospitality in 2020 to address the lack of senior representation for people of colour in hospitality. The enterprise sparks vital conversations and drives change in the industry. Lorraine serves on boards, judges prestigious awards and has won accolades like GQ Food & Drink Innovator of the Year. Recognised by NatWest's SE100 as a leading UK social enterprise, Be Inclusive Hospitality continues to work with operators to be inclusive. www.bihospitality.co.uk



Josh Light,
Founder/Director,
Bright Ideas Strategic
Consulting

Josh is a versatile hospitality leader with a strategic mindset. With a deep understanding of people and culture and a broad range of operational experience, Josh has successfully setup multiple businesses across the industry and has driven business growth and improved organisational performance on multiple projects. He is skilled in developing and implementing innovative strategies across the entire employee and customer journeys that align with overall business objectives.



Patryk Luszczyk,
Regional Director,
Profitroom

Patryk Luszczyk is the Regional Director for the UK at Profitroom, a leading hospitality technology company. With a wealth of experience in hotel marketing and sales, Patryk plays a key role in helping hotels optimise their revenue

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and guest experience through advanced booking solutions. He has a strong background in digital marketing and hospitality management, enabling him to understand the unique needs of the UK market. Patryk is passionate about driving growth for hotels by implementing innovative technology solutions that enhance efficiency and profitability. His leadership is instrumental in expanding Profitroom's presence across the region.



Neetu Mistry,
Chief Commercial
Officer, Cycas
Hospitality

Neetu is Chief Commercial Officer at Cycas Hospitality, responsible for driving revenues into Cycas' growing hotel portfolio of 55 hotels across 12 European countries. She has developed Commercial strategies for hotels across the UK and Europe, working with both independent hotels as well as global brands including Marriott, IHG, Hilton, Hyatt, Radisson, Accor and Premier Inn. Since joining Cycas in 2018, Neetu has built Europe's strongest hospitality commercial function.



Gemma Hynes,
Client Services
Director, Net Affinity

Gemma is the Client Services Director at Net Affinity, a leading hotel technology company dedicated to simplifying life for hoteliers by driving commercial success through direct bookings for Independent, Resort and Group hotels. With almost 20 years in the hospitality industry, including over a decade with Net Affinity, Gemma has extensive expertise in revenue management, marketing and sales, developed through roles with major brands like Sheraton and IHG as well as with smaller, independent properties, equipping her with a deep understanding of the unique needs of hotels of all sizes. Passionate about maximising Net Affinity's clients' direct booking potential, Gemma is dedicated to helping hoteliers achieve sustainable growth and profitability through innovative technology and tailored solutions.



Michael Baxter,
Founder, House of Gods

Mike Baxter is a serial entrepreneur and founder of houseofgodshotel.com, getsomekip.com and theBaxter.eu.

Mike has a passion for creating not only beautiful hotels but immersive experiences that far surpass the norm. As founder and creative director of House of Gods, Mike has created a hotel experience like no other, drawing on the aesthetics of the great heritage hotels of the world to create a luxurious yet accessible hotel offering loved by its guests. Having successfully launched in Edinburgh and Glasgow, Mike and the team are about to locate to London with a 65,000 square foot property in the heart of Canary Wharf due to open October 2025.



Ryan Haynes,
Director, Haynes
MarComs

Ryan Haynes, director of Haynes MarComs, has worked in the travel and hospitality industry for over 15 years as a specialist in technology systems delivering consultancy on market engagement, including Spotahome, Pegasus, IDeaS, Sciant, Vrbo (HomeAway) and eRevMax. He provides MarComs with strategic support as the business grows into new markets. Since 2020 he has hosted the podcast Travel Market Life which explores developments in the travel sector, technology decision-making and digitalisation, and the series Hoteliers' Voice explores strategic development of hotels. Prior to marketing, Ryan had a career in broadcasting at Radio 1, TalkSport and LBC, and worked with leading international PR agencies Team Lewis, Fleishmann-Hillard, and Rooster PR.



Neal Stone,
Founder and Director,
leapSTONE

Neal Stone is a visionary leader in design and innovation, renowned for his transformative approach to integrating design thinking into organisations' strategies. He founded leapSTONE in 2009 and has worked with organisations from many sectors, sizes and regions including IHG Hotels & Resorts, the BBC, NHS and WWF-UK. He was formerly Head of Design at British Airways where he led the breakthrough design of the world's first flat beds in business class. Neal's work exemplifies the value in discovering underlying customer and colleague challenges, and not jumping to solutions, while blending innovation with practical, impactful solutions in complex multistakeholder environments.



Nicola Rhone,
VP Business
Development EMEA
& APAC, SHR Group

Nicola has over 20 years of commercial experience in the hospitality industry, helping hotels and resorts optimise their online presence and revenue. She's always looking for new opportunities to innovate and improve the hospitality sector. Nicola is Vice President Business Development EMEA & APAC for SHR Group - an Access company - delivering cutting-edge, AI-powered solutions for Distribution, IBE, CRM, RMS, Digital Marketing and Website Design.



Ben Dixon,
Co-Founder, Sona

Ben is a serial founder and experienced technology leader who has been focused on bringing consumer grade experiences to frontline workforces for most of the last decade. His main focus at Sona at the moment is understanding how AI can be used to embed intelligence and consistency into every decision that is made and action taken when dealing with a frontline workforce, freeing up people to focus on the things only they can do.



Nikhil Desai,
Associate Director,
Cyber & Technology,
Howden

Nikhil has twelve years' experience in the insurance industry, having specialised in Cyber and Technology risks for the past five. Nikhil has significant experience with clients ranging from start-ups to large multinationals, helping them identify, analyse and control their cyber risk. Nikhil joined Howden in 2023 to assist in developing their UK retail strategy, including client management, data strategy, thought leadership and various other projects. Prior to joining Howden in 2023, Nikhil was at Marsh and previously La Playa.



Neil Braude,
Chief Operating
Officer, Imperial Hotels

Neil has worked for over 26 years in the hospitality industry, with the last 17 focused on leading operations across London as a Revenue Manager and General Manager for both independent

and branded hotels. Today, as the Group Operating Officer for Imperial London Hotels, he is responsible for overseeing nearly 3,500 rooms in the heart of the city, including the Royal National Hotel, Western Europe's largest hotel with 1,652 rooms, car parks and a commercial laundry. He is deeply committed to delivering excellence for both his guests and teams. He is a proud member of the Institute of Hospitality and is a St. Julians Scholar.



Oscar Carty,
Senior Manager,
Sales, Europe, Cvent

Oscar Carty is Senior Manager, Sales, Hospitality Cloud, Europe at Cvent. He heads up Cvent's European sales team and is responsible for building and nurturing hotel partnerships. With over nine years of experience in the event technology and hospitality sectors across Europe, Oscar leverages his extensive knowledge of Cvent's offerings to help clients meet and surpass their goals. As a senior member of the management team at Cvent, Oscar also contributes significantly to product development and new product launches and influences cross-cloud initiatives, bridging planners and hoteliers across Europe.



Jon Cortinas,
Associate Sales
Director, Shiji

Jon Cortinas has dedicated over three and a half years to Shiji, currently serving as an Associate Sales Director. With more than a decade of experience in independent hotels in London, Jon has established strong relationships with prestigious brands such as Peninsula, Mandarin Oriental, IHG and Marriott. As part of Shiji's European sales team, Jon helps build industry partnerships and support growth in the UK and Ireland. With his experience and commitment, Jon has become a valued contributor to Shiji's success in the hospitality sector.



Steve Johnson,
Senior Director,
North and East Europe,
Ruckus Networks

Steve Johnson is Senior Director, North and East Europe, for Ruckus Networks. Prior to his eight-year tenure at Ruckus, Steve spent time in management roles at Tech Data, 3Com and Extreme Networks.

A long standing in the network industry is mapped to a history of deep and successful engagements with education establishments of all sizes.



Andrew Evers,
Group Director of IT,
Rocco Forte Hotels

Andrew has worked in technology for almost 30 years, half of which has been in the luxury hospitality industry. He has designed, deployed, maintained and managed the technology infrastructure and guest technology experience for some of the world's most beloved luxury hotels, restaurants and spas. He sees tech as just one part of the overall guest experience and is careful to always put the guests' needs first. Today, he is the Group Director of IT for Rocco Forte Hotels.



Simon Casson,
CEO, Corinthia Hotels

Simon Casson, CEO of Corinthia Hotels, is celebrated for his people-first leadership and dedication to kindness. Joining Corinthia in 2024, he aims to elevate the brand globally while protecting its rich heritage. Drawing on over three decades with Four Seasons, where he led 42 hotels across 26 countries, Casson blends empathy and acuity, shaped by his early experiences in hospitality. Known for his charisma and talent for nurturing teams, he is committed to honouring Corinthia's legacy, fostering its culture, and positioning it as a distinctive challenger in luxury hospitality.



Chris Wayne-Wills
MI FIH, CEO, Crerar
Hotels Group

Chris has over 25 years' senior industry experience. Formerly Regional Managing Director for Macdonald Hotels, Cluster GM for Marriott for Scotland and the North, and at The Midland in Manchester, The Macdonald Aviemore Resort and Slaley Hall. He is currently CEO of Crerar Hotels, Chairman for UK Hospitality Scotland and a Fellow of the Institute of Hospitality. In 2023 he was awarded the CEO Monthly award as most influential Hotel Group CEO in the UK and Crerar Hotels was recognised as the AA Small Hotel Group of the Year 2023/24. Chris became a Master Innholder and in 2024 was awarded CEO of the Year by the Scottish Professional Awards.



Anna Jackson,
General Manager,
The Sloane Club

Anna spent 16 years of her career at Firmedale Hotels, with roles including General Manager of The Knightsbridge Hotel, Charlotte Street Hotel and The Soho Hotel, and Operations Director overseeing 10 Boutique Hotels, (eight based in London and two in New York). Subsequent to this, Anna was Chief Operating Officer for Andre Balazs Properties (Chiltern Firehouse in London, Chateau Marmont in Los Angeles and Sunset Beach Hotel in The Hamptons). Anna joined the Sloane Estate in January 2024 to oversee the extensive refurbishment and repositioning of The Sloane Club. In addition, Anna manages the day-to-day operation of Sloane Place and The Apartments by Sloane Club.



Neena Jivraj
Stevenson,
Managing Director,
The Sloane Club

Neena started her career in Management Consulting. In 2016, she joined Queensway, her family's business, which comprises Hotels, Food & Beverage franchises, Residential Property and The Sloane Club. Neena's roles have been diverse - developing corporate governance, launching the Point A Hotels brand, establishing Sloane Place boutique hotel and restaurant and being the custodian of Queensway's culture, values and employee experience. With a major refurbishment underway at The Sloane Club, Neena, together with Anna, is re-establishing this historic brand and building through the lens of people - investing heavily in both the team and the carefully curated membership.



Liz Hartstone,
Co-Founder,
Hartstone Rochette
Executive Search

Liz has over 30 years of recruitment experience in the luxury hospitality arena following her formative years with Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts. Since 1988 Liz has been travelling the world, developing an extensive network of some of the most respected hoteliers as well as owners of some of the finest hotels and hospitality businesses globally. When handling assignments, much of Liz's time, energy and focus goes into the

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candidate's fit and match with her client's values and the company culture. Liz is a Fellow of the Institute of Hospitality where she has recently joined the Board of Trustees.

Workshop Speakers



Peter Davies,
Client Service Partner,
WMT Troncmaster
Services

Peter is Client Service Partner of WMT Troncmaster Services, part of Moore Kingston Smith, and has been recognised as the leading industry expert on the subject of tips and tronc for over 20 years. Peter works with hundreds of the UK's leading hospitality businesses, helping them operate legal, fair, transparent and beneficial tronc systems for themselves and their teams. With a passion for his industry, he enjoys public speaking and has contributed to trade and accountancy publications as well as making TV and Radio appearances. His wealth of experience in a niche market helps him to be the best at what he does and a highly sought-after individual.



Shaun Sequeira,
County Lead UK
& Ireland, HiJiffy

Shaun is currently leading HiJiffy's growth in the United Kingdom & Ireland. He's driven by hospitality tech and is at the forefront of how conversational AI can empower hoteliers to improve efficiencies while boosting revenue. Shaun has a background in hospitality management and has previously worked at Four Seasons, the Rosewood Hotel Group and many other luxurious groups around the world. He now applies his knowledge from the industry to help hoteliers improve their tech stack in this ever-changing landscape.



Sharon McArthur,
Director of Operations,
The Athenaeum Hotel
& Residences

Sharon McArthur brings over a decade of expertise from Michelin-starred restaurants to large luxury establishments. Her career highlights include successfully opening four new restaurants and building high-performing teams renowned for their exceptional

service standards. Known for driving sales and enhancing guest experience, Sharon excels in financial management and innovative promotions. A certified sommelier, she has crafted award-winning wine lists throughout her career, with the Hotel Cateys 2021 recognising her as Food and Beverage Manager of the Year. Multilingual and highly organised, Sharon's hands-on leadership fosters excellence across all levels of operations.



Yogesh Ram,
Head of Marketing,
The Athenaeum Hotel
& Residences

Yogesh drives the hotel's marketing, digital and commercial insights strategies with a focus on data-driven guest experiences. Leveraging AI and advanced CRM tools, he enhances guest targeting and personalisation, unifying revenue, sales and marketing efforts. His diverse background spans hospitality operations, blue-chip marketing and agency roles, including with luxury club Home House and hotel operator Safestay PLC. Known for activating guest data to connect and elevate the guest journey, Yogesh's leadership has brought a transformative, insight-driven approach to The Athenaeum's commercial strategy.



Mathias Karady,
VP Portfolio Growth,
Sage

A former strategy and organisation design consultant, Mathias has worked in the "Office of the CFO" technology industry for over 12 years across a range of strategic and operational roles. As a member of the product leadership team for Sage's Finance & ERP division, Mathias owns the inorganic growth strategy for products such as Sage Intacct and Sage X3, working with market-leading third parties to deliver innovative AI-powered propositions to Sage's customers and partners.



David Poprawka,
Solution Consultant,
Global Products, Infor
Hospitality

With nearly 20 years of experience in hospitality, revenue management and business intelligence, David Poprawka is a Principal Solution Consultant at Infor Hospitality, specialising in AI-powered SaaS for global clients. Based in Paris,

he drives IT-enabled transformations and product innovation using advanced technologies like Generative AI. Previously, David advised on revenue strategy for Infor EMEA and held leadership roles at J.P. Morgan Asset Management and Jumeirah Group. His early career included management roles with Hilton and Kempinski. David's expertise spans Yield Management, Business Intelligence, Analytics and the implementation of solutions to support business growth.



Adam Dattis,
Director of Customer
Success for Global
Hotels, Fourth

Adam is Fourth's Director of Customer Success for Global Hotels, responsible for ensuring customers maximise the profitability of their inventory and workforce management by leveraging the Fourth platform. He is a subject matter expert in the full lifecycle of purchasing and inventory management within hotels, including the application of analytics and AI. Adam has worked at Fourth for 11 years, preceded by a 9-year stint as a general manager in hospitality brands including Wagamama.