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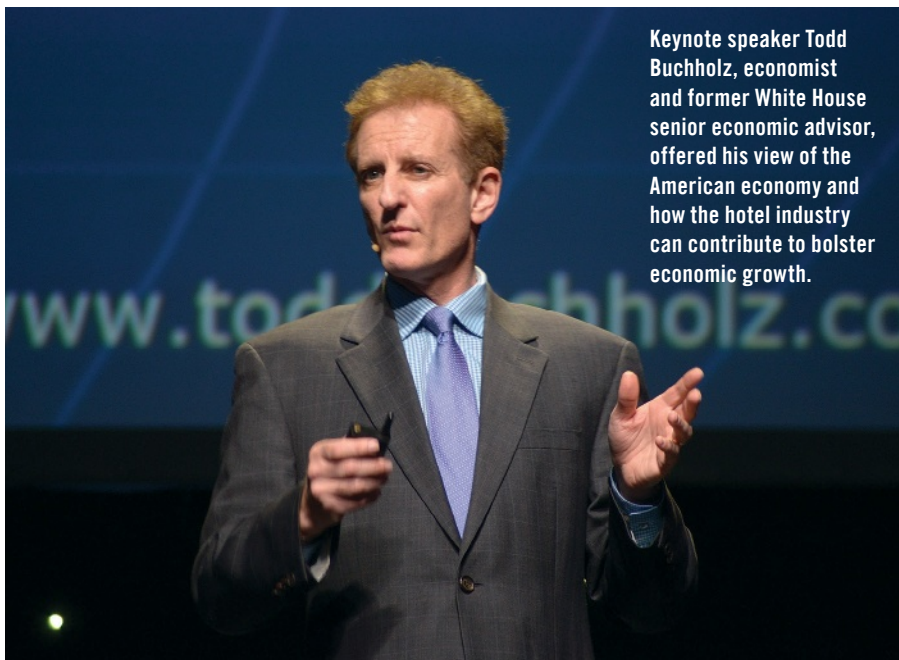
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INSIDE

■ **For CEO Gerry Lopez**, heading up AMC Entertainment and, now, ESA is not all that different. Either way, it's about the guest. **page 8**

■ **The Gallery by American Hotel**, just launched by American Hotel Register Company, will offer high-end products to luxury properties. **page 10**

■ **A one and a two...** Welk Resorts, a vacation ownership company, is expanding with a couple of new properties in key markets. **page 63**



Keynote speaker Todd Buchholz, economist and former White House senior economic advisor, offered his view of the American economy and how the hotel industry can contribute to bolster economic growth.

HB EXCLUSIVE

Cornell to merge business programs

By Matthew Marin
Associate Editor

ITHACA, NY—Since Lee Pillsbury, founder, co-chairman and CEO of Thayer Lodging Group, Inc., graduated from the Cornell University School of Hotel Administration in 1969, the lodging industry has been impacted by a number of disruptors. Most recently, the digital age has forced the industry to develop new strategies to compete with online travel agencies (OTAs) and online rental lodging networks.

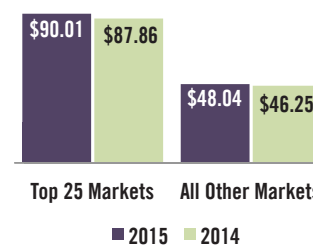
“I strongly believe the future success of our country is going to be in the hands of our younger generation,” said Pillsbury, who is also a member of the Cornell University Board of Trustees. During a Jan. 30 meeting, the board

continued on page 64

the stat corner

Performance in Top 25 Markets

RevPAR December 2015 vs. December 2014



HB ON THE SCENE

Industry still upbeat while seeking a peak at ALIS

By Stefani C. O'Connor
Executive News Editor

LOS ANGELES—If there were any disrupters at the kickoff of The Americas Lodging Investment Summit (ALIS) here late last month, it was most likely the site of veteran executives Laurence Geller in lederhosen, Tom Corcoran in his favorite frilly frock and W. Michael Murphy in a jaunty Alpine chapeau,

all belting out the conference theme “Where’s the Peak?” in a style worthy of the von Trapp family.

The trio and other participants ushered in the conference in the Microsoft Theater at L.A. Live in front of some 3,000 attendees, a record number for the event (despite some cancellations due to blizzard conditions up and down the East Coast), according to Jim

continued on page 11

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ShopTalk

Industry pros discuss must-have products & latest trends





Topex Design's Fiaba vanity series features glass finish cabinets with matching solid glass countertops. The vanities are made of solid aluminum, are completely waterproof and come in four sizes. Colors include black, burgundy, delmar silver and white.



The Ametis Collection from Graff includes the Ametis ring and lavatory faucet. The Ametis ring features a dual-function showerhead with rain and waterfall settings. It integrates a six-color spectrum with RGB LED, allowing the user to select different moods. Made with stainless steel, it comes in chrome, architectural black and architectural white finishes.



The Raffia series from Nemo Tile features a fabric effect on a rectified porcelain surface with three-dimensional texture, achieved through digital printing and layering of different patterns and lines, paying homage to pixel art from the 1980s. The tiles can be used indoors or outdoors and for wall applications.

Barn doors give the bath entryway a different look.

Enhance the shower experience with bench seats and multiple heads.

Tips & Trends

Lighter colors are easier to clean.

New looks for bath entryway, shower

Is there any part of the guestroom more essential than the bathroom? Since it's so integral to the guest experience, the hospitality industry needs to pay special attention to the latest trends in bath design.

One of these trends begins with the very first step guests take into the bathroom. "It's the smallest room in the entire hotel, but it's the most relied on," said Stacy Elliston, principal of Studio 11 Design. "We're looking more now to create a barn-door experience so there's no door swinging into the bathroom itself.

"Several years ago, when we were suggesting the barn doors, it wasn't something the brands had caught onto quite yet, so it was a little bit of a sell to them to allow us to do that," she said. "Now, there's more receptiveness because it does make sense, space-wise. It's also not as cost prohibitive anymore. I think, moving forward, it's going to be more of the norm than the exception."

Beyond the entryway, showers are constantly evolving. "We're seeing that brands are starting to accept a higher percentage of rooms with showers, especially in queen rooms, in lieu of tubs," said Hiten Patel, VP of development and construction, Vision Hospitality.

"Some brands and owners are looking to do a door-less shower," said Elliston. "Obviously that requires a little bit more depth and layout of the shower itself, but some really like it."

Deidre Schwartz, director of design & sustainability, American Hotel Register, advised focusing on the guest. "The shower experience is second only to the sleeping experience to people," she noted. "Make them larger, provide a bench seat, and consider a hand-shower and multiple heads; that's memorable.

"For resorts with amazing views, consider an

open bathing space with views out to nature," Schwartz continued. "Nothing can set the tone of the day better than to cleanse with a view and perhaps feeling the breeze cascade in."

Lighter colors are making their way into the design aesthetic. "We are starting to see white vanity tops—white quartz, for example—as well as a lot of cast marble tub and shower surrounds in lieu of hard tile," said Patel. "This helps to minimize installation errors and also is a lot easier to clean."

Though a white scheme is a new trend, it is also key to making bath design last. "Most of the finishes in a bath remain in place for quite some time, so I would recommend going neutral for the most part," Schwartz said.

Brighter bathrooms also mean better lighting. "One of the number one complaints we get from ownership and properties are complaints about lighting in bathrooms systematically," said Elliston. "We're getting more feedback and requests for a lit mirror—it has a huge presence. I want to create a nice light output. We are now getting some leeway to add more decorative sconces in addition to that lighting."

When it comes to renovation, one has to be particularly strategic to incorporate these trends successfully. "In instances where a request for a lit mirror is made, we have to make sure the existing mirror's big enough to cover the locations, if we don't have the opportunity to add additional sconces," said Elliston.

In lieu of decorative elements such as sconces, Elliston leaves it up to the wallcoverings to create an inviting aesthetic. Schwartz suggests using the wall treatment, whether paint or vinyl, to accent the color scheme with a punch of color.

"When I first started, wallcoverings were so decorative, and they had huge patterns to them," Elliston recalled. "I think the trend has gone to a cleaner aesthetic—it isn't so fussy now. We've been able to make a big splash with less 'decoration' to them."

—Danielle Smith

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Consider the linen type for proper care and laundering.



The Barclay Butera Landon Collection is inspired by the mountain vistas in Park City, UT. The duvet and shams are 100% brushed cotton, designed for a cashmere-like feel that is machine washable.

Use a platform with a mattress for an updated look.

Tips & Trends

Make bedding elements available at retail to guests.

Ease of care and sense of luxury are top of mind in bedding

The hallmark of a truly memorable and comfortable hotel stay is a good night's sleep, which is why bedding and its many components are paramount to the overall experience. "It says, you care about the guests," shared Marji Waldman, president, The Stroud Group.

"No matter what sector—luxury, boutique, flagship, limited-service—you want to provide a place to relax. The majority of Americans don't get enough rest. Our goal is to provide bedding that can offer a good night's sleep and productive day," concurred Linsey Forni-Pullan, EVP, Pacific Inns.

Simplification, cost effectiveness and implied luxury seem to be benchmarks for all sectors in bedding, according to Waldman. "When possible, platforms with a mattress only are used in lieu of the traditional mattress or box spring, frame and either box spring cover or dust skirt," she said. "This accomplishes three objectives: First, it provides an updated look without compromise to the sleep experience. Second, there is generally no impact to the overall cost and, in some cases, may provide a savings. Third, housekeeping will spend less time in the room because there are no dust skirts to fuss with or clean, and guests can't mistakenly leave items under the bed."

If you think guests are too bleary-eyed to notice the quality of the linens, think again, as

the industry begins to shift its focus to the proper care and laundering of linens and reap the benefits. "For our portfolio, we are moving to a cold-water linen program, and we've been testing it for a year now. There's been a 52% cost savings and 45% energy savings. It gives us a product that costs less and is fresh, clean and bright," said Pullan. "It's less energy, less water and uses a program that doesn't have harsh chemicals that doesn't deteriorate products, so it's a win-win for everyone."

Hospitality designers, owners and procurement specialists alike agree that operability is one of the main drivers in the decision-making process for guestroom bedding. Plus, will it endure?

"There was a huge move in upgrading linen to all cotton and higher thread counts. Properties had issues with laundering the higher thread count and more expensive linen. Some of the higher-count linen and bamboo sheets didn't last as long or weren't always the most luxurious," said Waldman. "A number of properties have recently elected to go with a 300-350 thread count as a general rule and, in many cases, with a little poly so the sheet is easier to iron and also more durable. Many luxury properties still use high-end brands to promote their property, and that brand's level of luxury."

Aesthetics and how the elements of a room

come together can also enhance the sleep experience. Designers are trending toward bigger headboards; nightstands built within the headboard as one piece; and using the height of the bed as way to evoke a sense of luxury. In selecting furnishings to elevate the look and of the space, Waldman advises addressing the following questions: "Is the nightstand the right height for the bed? Is the bed the proper height? Is the lighting sufficient? Are there enough sheets and blankets?"

More hotel brands are seeing retail opportunities through the sale of in-room bedding such as high-tech mattresses, luxury linens and hotel-branded pillows. Wynn Las Vegas launched a new line of luxury bedding in standard rooms, available for purchase on-site.

"Many of the brands now have the option for guests to purchase the linens and a major brand wouldn't roll out the program unless it's a superior product. For a guest to wake up and say, 'I want these for our home,' is the biggest compliment," said Pullan.

For every hotel, it's all about providing the basics—comfortable and clean bedding—and then reaching beyond those baseline standards in unexpected ways to remain competitive and exceed guest satisfaction.

"Whether it's the Ritz or a Holiday Inn, if you have a good quality sheet and pillow, you'll get that guest to return again," said Pullan. "When you turn the lights off, no matter what chain or property, you feel and experience nothing else but the bed. We must ensure an excellent sleep experience for guests."

—Corris Little