

6 hotel trends to keep an eye on

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Partnering with local artists and an influx of lifestyle brands are two trends that likely will continue in the year ahead.

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This year has been big. Having been fortunate to speak at a number of conferences in a wide variety of markets this year (the United States, Europe and the Middle East), I've noted similarities between the markets with regard to trends in the hotel industry.

Here are the six industry trends I'm expecting as we move forward:

1. **Local sourcing:** This no longer pertains to the menu only; hoteliers are partnering with local artists and artisans to ground their properties with a sense of place and an understanding of the local culture. Additionally, emphasis on working with sustainable practices and materials continues to drive many decisions in the hospitality industry. This leads me to my next trend...
2. **Think green:** I see the idea of "green" as trending toward becoming code for luxury standards. Our socially conscious consumer is demanding "green," so staying ahead of the game versus minimizing the short-term costs can not only lead to a more desirable product but those innovative ideas and solutions that could set your product apart from the competition.
3. **Less is more:** The trend is toward fewer, but more creative in-house restaurants that will keep guests in the hotel and effectively compete with neighborhood establishments as well as reduce the space required, which could potentially go into another revenue-producing function or potentially streamline a new building to be even more efficient with reduced required program.
4. **Show me the money:** The majority of spend should always be placed on guest-facing items. The guest's first impression starts with a visual, followed by each element of service that a guest looks for. Cutting costs that affect the guest experience only cheats the guest out of that unique experience—your differentiator—that you've worked so hard to create.
5. **Hotel giants and their boutique lifestyle brands:** Hotel companies are taking notice of millennials and their need for approachable, affordable, but unique hotel stays. (Note: Hilton Worldwide Holdings' recent release of new brand Canopy, Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide's Aloft brand and Commune Hotels & Resorts' Tommie brand, to name a few)
6. **Appeal to emotions:** Guests are looking for an emotional connection, so always keep in mind the story you are trying to tell. If the story becomes lost during the engineering process, then shift the dollars back to the concept. First impressions are key, so the lobby is the logical space in which to focus to create an impression for guests. Next, be sure to appeal to what is familiar by providing creature comforts in the guestroom. (When doing so, always keep in mind the story you've begun to tell in the lobby and throughout the hotel; a uniform message should be clear and approachable for guests.) Our socially savvy millennials, a group that will outnumber the baby boomers by 22 million in 2030, are looking to tell a story on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc. Will you provide them with the tools to tell your story?

I'd love to hear from you! Email me your thoughts on trends at ajakubowski@puccinigroup.com.

An expert in the hospitality industry, Amy brings demonstrated leadership and an extensive background to the Puccini Group team. A graduate of New York City's Fashion Institute of Technology with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Interior Design, Amy is NCIDQ certified and a licensed designer in New York and in Nevada. She is an active member of many professional organizations, including the International Society of Hospitality Consultants (ISHC) and the International Interior Design Association (IIDA). Additionally, Amy recently served as President of the New York Chapter of NEWH and sits on the NCD 2015 International Advisory Board for the Guri World Design Center in Korea.

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