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PASSION FOR HOSPITALITY



EDITOR'S VIEW BY JEFF WEINSTEIN

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Two differentiating trends

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(The views and opinions expressed in this blog are strictly those of the author.)

I'm particularly encouraged this month by two themes in our January-February issue that show how hotels can truly differentiate as well as reinforce what I consider crucial trends for hoteliers to follow and best compete with disruptors.

Let me start by gushing over Dietmar Müller-Elmau's [Orania Berlin](#) hotel, which opened about five months ago and taps into a trend that is coming fast – hotel entertainment. What sets Orania Berlin apart is that it not only brings in local artists but local political figures to offer discourse on the issues of the day. As a result of sometimes controversial commentaries, the hotel has been in the news for its risk-taking, which has helped generate gangbuster business, according to Müller-Elmau. Artists perform on the lobby area stage and stay at the hotel instead of getting paid, making themselves available to interact with guests looking for inspiration and to meet those who are of different minds – not like-minded travelers.

What Orania Berlin also does is offer experiences that home-sharing providers cannot – and that is one of the key takeaways. Not surprisingly, with the immediate success of Berlin, Müller-Elmau wants to replicate the concept in other cultural gateways.

The other concept I want to reinforce relates to sustainability. It has been a part of hospitality's nomenclature for years, but I believe it is now ready to matter even more to independent travelers and groups. All the data about how we are destroying the planet is too compelling and seems to matter more to the next generation of consumers. In addition to a feature on a consciously designed hotel in Mexico that graces our cover this month, HOTELS Managing Editor Barbara Bohn looked at the state of [sustainable practices](#) and found out how important it is to get started during the feasibility stage of design.

One group I want to bring to your attention is Now (itmustbenow.com), an initiative calling for true accountability around sustainability with no greenwashing allowed. Led by Alexa and Onno Poortier, a luxury hotelier who has held senior leadership positions at the likes of The Peninsula Group and properties across Switzerland, the duo's no-nonsense, help save the planet approach is refreshing and hopefully what the hotel industry needs to improve its scorecard.

While measurement and benchmarking are truly critical they are too often not mandated. However, those who do go the extra mile will be recognized and have a differentiator that will matter more.

As you look for ways to stand apart, rise above the fray and position yourself for longer-term success, looking at entertainment and your sustainability quotient are two great starting points.

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