

HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY THINK TANK '26

AGENDA

Let us collaborate and discuss the following topics as industry leaders and debate the challenges and opportunities for hospitality and tourism.

07:30 – 08:30 ARRIVAL, TEA, COFFEE AND PASTRIES

08:30 – 09:45 WELCOME AND OPENING ADDRESS

Dave Milne

COO, Peermont Hotels

Dave joined Peermont in 1999 as Group CIO and has held various executive roles over the past 26 years. He has served as Group Hospitality Executive since 2017. His earlier career included roles in operations and/or information technology at prominent South African hotel chains, including Southern Sun Hotels, Picardi Hotels, Protea Hotels and Legacy Hotels.



Dimitris Manikis

President for Europe, Middle East, Eurasia and Africa (EMEA) Wyndham Hotels & Resorts

Dimitris Manikis is President of EMEA at Wyndham Hotels & Resorts and he is responsible for the development of all of Wyndham Hotels & Resorts' brands in the EMEA region as well as maximising the performance of all new and existing franchise and managed hotels. He focuses on driving the strategic objectives of Wyndham Hotels & Resorts including quality and technology solutions as well as new business, loyalty, sales and marketing.



Dimitris Manikis has a long-standing career and deep knowledge of the hospitality industry. Prior to joining Wyndham Hotels & Resorts 8 years ago, he spent over 27 years with RCI, the worldwide leader in vacation exchange, across a number of senior roles, and most recently served as Vice President of Business Development for EMEA. Earlier in his career, he also held a number of key positions in the region as Managing Director of RCI Greece and RCI South Africa.

Dimitris is a Board Member for the World Sustainable Hospitality Association, an Industry Advisory Board member for Hotelschool the Hague and a Member of the HSMAl Europe Board of Directors.

He is based in Wyndham Hotels & Resorts' London office.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Johnny Goldberg

Chairman, Global Business Solutions

Jonathan has been a leading figure in labour law for over thirty years, advising on negotiations at plant, industry, and national levels. A respected adviser and speaker, he represents business in key roles, including Commissioner on the National Minimum Wage Commission, Labour Market Convenor at NEDLAC and member of the Employment Services Board. As a Chartered Director, he recently led the business delegation on labour law amendments at NEDLAC.



10:00 – 11:00 PANEL DISCUSSION 1

The economic impact that geopolitics is having with the ongoing Ukraine and Gulf war, and the ever-changing trade tariffs pushing Southern Africa in an eastward direction.

FACILITATOR:

Dimitris Manikis: *Wyndham Hotels & Resorts*

PANELISTS:

Johnny Goldberg: *Global Business Solutions*

Mokwena Morulane: *Cresta Hotels*

Nicholas Dickson: *Dream Hotels & Resorts*

Jacob Messina: *StaynTouch*

Dimitris Manikis

President for Europe, Middle East, Eurasia and Africa (EMEA) Wyndham Hotels & Resorts

Dimitris Manikis is President of EMEA at Wyndham Hotels & Resorts and he is responsible for the development of all of Wyndham Hotels & Resorts' brands in the EMEA region as well as maximising the performance of all new and existing franchise and managed hotels. He focuses on driving the strategic objectives of Wyndham Hotels & Resorts including quality and technology solutions as well as new business, loyalty, sales and marketing.

Dimitris Manikis has a long-standing career and deep knowledge of the hospitality industry. Prior to joining Wyndham Hotels & Resorts 8 years ago, he spent over 27 years with RCI, the worldwide leader in vacation exchange, across a number of senior roles, and most recently served as Vice President of Business Development for EMEA. Earlier in his career, he also held a number of key positions in the region as Managing Director of RCI Greece and RCI South Africa.

Dimitris is a Board Member for the World Sustainable Hospitality Association, an Industry Advisory Board member for Hotelschool the Hague and a Member of the HSMAI Europe Board of Directors.

He is based in Wyndham Hotels & Resorts' London office.

Johnny Goldberg

Chairman, Global Business Solutions

Jonathan has been a leading figure in labour law for over thirty years, advising on negotiations at plant, industry, and national levels. A respected adviser and speaker, he represents business in key roles, including Commissioner on the National Minimum Wage Commission, Labour Market Convenor at NEDLAC and member of the Employment Services Board. As a Chartered Director, he recently led the business delegation on labour law amendments at NEDLAC.

Mokwena Morulane

ACCA Managing Director, Cresta Marakanelo Limited

Mokwena Morulane, ACCA, is the Managing Director of Cresta Marakanelo Limited, a Botswana Stock Exchange-listed hospitality group and one of the country's leading hotel brands. Appointed in 2017, he has played a key role in strengthening the company's strategic direction, operational performance, and brand positioning within Botswana's tourism and corporate travel sector.

A seasoned finance and governance professional, Morulane brings extensive leadership experience across professional services, mining, energy, and hospitality. He previously served as General Manager: Corporate Services at Botswana Oil Limited and Country Manager for Botswana at Discovery Metals, and began his career with Deloitte. He holds a BA (Hons) in Accounting from the University of Luton in the United Kingdom, is a Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), and a Member of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries and Governance in Southern Africa.

He also completed the Executive Leadership Programme at Saïd Business School, University of Oxford.

Mokwena Morulane continues to guide Cresta Marakanelo with a focus on sustainable growth, governance excellence, and delivering high-quality hospitality experiences that support Botswana's tourism and business travel ecosystem.

Nicholas Dickson

Chief Executive Officer, Dream Hotels & Resorts

Having graduated from the University of Cape Town with an Honours Degree in Business Science, Nick became a Chartered Accountant in 2008 and joined Dream Hotels & Resorts in 2009. Nick has vast experience within the hospitality and timeshare industry and currently serves on the VOASA board.

Having taken over the role of CEO at Dream Hotels & Resorts in 2021, Nick has been instrumental in redefining the company's ethos. Our mission at Dream Hotels & Resorts is to deliver dynamic and exceptional hospitality solutions in Africa that connect local and global travellers to our communities in a sustainable and relevant manner. Since our inception, we have long been driven by our purpose of making local holidays more accessible and inspiring wanderlust across the most diverse destinations in South Africa.

Here at Dream Hotels & Resorts, we are now actively reimagining a brighter future together. As we continue to expand and reimagine extraordinary travel experiences, we will continue to challenge ourselves to lead with purpose, ensuring that we act with accountability and local impact.

Jacob Messina

Chief Executive Officer, StaynTouch

Jacob Messina, the CEO of StaynTouch, is a seasoned leader with a profound understanding of technology's critical role in the hospitality sector. Before taking the reins at StaynTouch, he served as the Senior Vice President of Technology and Innovation at MCR Hotels, where he oversaw technology for a portfolio of 150 hotels.

With over a decade of experience at Loews Hotels & Co., his expertise spans hotel technology, distribution, and digital transformation. Jacob's unique blend of hotel and tech knowledge positions him as a dynamic force propelling StaynTouch's innovation in the hospitality industry, all with a strong commitment to the customer experience.

11:00 – 11:30 TEA, COFFEE AND SNACK BREAK



11:30 – 12:30 PANEL DISCUSSION 2

Technology and AI: where have we progressed from last year's conversation on training your AI tools and simplifying interfaces between different systems? How do we best use AI to process data and improve revenue growth without compromising the guest experience?

FACILITATOR:

Samantha Williams: *Profit Room Ltd.*

PANELISTS:

Sarah Marron: *Aven Hospitality*

Janine Louw: *Profitroom Ltd.*

Jacob Messina: *Stayntouch*

Chris Snyman: *Dream Hotels & Resorts*

Samantha Williams

Chief Customer Officer, Profit Room Ltd.

Samantha Williams is a renowned expert in direct bookings and an award-winning revenue specialist, currently serving as the Chief Customer Officer (CCO) at Profitroom. With a wealth of experience in hospitality, Samantha has built a highly respected career, excelling in revenue management, sales, and marketing.

Before joining Profitroom, she managed a diverse portfolio of over 75 hotels as a Senior Revenue and Product Manager and held senior sales and marketing roles for leisure resorts and hotels in the UK. Her extensive experience across various hotel disciplines allows her to deeply understand and address the challenges faced by hoteliers today.

Samantha is passionate about helping hoteliers maximise their revenue potential and is a strong advocate for personalised, automated systems and digital transformation. Her enthusiasm for technology enables her to support hotels in integrating innovative solutions that streamline operations, improve the guest experience, and drive sustainable revenue growth.

At Profitroom, Samantha is regarded as the voice of the customer, and she leads strategic and operational initiatives, delivering transformative results for leisure hotels and resorts across Europe, Africa, Asia, and beyond.

Sarah Marron

Aven Hospitality

Sarah Marron is Head of Sales and General Manager for the Middle East and Africa at Aven Hospitality, powered by SynXis (formerly Sabre Hospitality). A seasoned, trilingual commercial leader, she brings more than 30 years' experience driving sales excellence, strategic growth and market expansion across international hospitality markets. With extensive experience across Europe, the Middle East and Africa, Sarah has a proven track record of translating global strategy into regional success.

Since joining Sabre Hospitality Solutions in 2016, she has played a pivotal role in expanding the company's regional footprint, strengthening strategic partnerships and delivering commercial growth. By aligning innovative hospitality technology with local market needs, she has helped hotel partners optimise distribution, enhance performance and improve operational efficiency.

Based in Dubai, Sarah is recognised for her collaborative leadership style, her commitment to developing high-performing multicultural teams, and her passion for mentoring future hospitality leaders. She is also a strong advocate for diversity and the advancement of women in the industry.

Janine Louw

Senior Business Development Manager, Africa, Profit Room Ltd.

Janine Louw is a hospitality and travel sales specialist with extensive experience in relationship building, sales leadership and business development. Since joining Profitroom in 2023, she has helped expand the company's presence across Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean. With a consultative, relationship-driven approach,

Janine works closely with hoteliers to understand their challenges, simplify technology decisions and develop direct booking strategies that support sustainable growth. She believes successful hospitality technology is not simply about implementing new systems, but helping hotels take greater control of their revenue, guest data and booking journey. Her work has helped Profitroom secure new partners across South Africa, Zimbabwe and East Africa, while overcoming challenges such as payment gateway limitations.

Jacob Messina

Chief Executive Officer, Stayntouch

Jacob Messina, the CEO of StaynTouch, is a seasoned leader with a profound understanding of technology's critical role in the hospitality sector. Before taking the reins at StaynTouch, he served as the Senior Vice President of Technology and Innovation at MCR Hotels, where he oversaw technology for a portfolio of 150 hotels.

With over a decade of experience at Loews Hotels & Co., his expertise spans hotel technology, distribution, and digital transformation. Jacob's unique blend of hotel and tech knowledge positions him as a dynamic force propelling StaynTouch's innovation in the hospitality industry, all with a strong commitment to the customer experience.

Chris Snyman: *Chief Development Officer, Dream Hotels & Resorts*

Chris leads the group's development pipeline, asset management strategy and franchise expansion. With over 20 years of hospitality leadership, he focuses on unlocking asset value and driving revenue across a diverse portfolio. He also supports operational tech upgrades to enhance efficiency and guest service. As a former GM and Cluster Operations & Development Manager, he combines strategic insight with hands-on experience. He holds certifications from Cornell University and AHLEI and is known for his commercial acumen and guest-centric approach.

12:30 – 13:30 LUNCH



13:30 – 14:30 PANEL DISCUSSION 3

Our Associations (FEDHASA, SATSA, VOASA, SASTRA and TBCSA) and their relevance, with discussions around the impact of the upcoming Municipal Elections in SA and talking to Government.

FACILITATOR:

Dave Milne: *Peermont / TBCSA*

PANELISTS:

David Frost: *SATSA*

Michael Hagemann: *FEDHASA / African Sky*

Miguel Martins: *SASTRA*

Shaun Lamont: *VOASA / First Group*

Dave Milne

COO, Peermont Hotels

Dave joined Peermont in 1999 as Group CIO and has held various executive roles over the past 26 years. He has served as Group Hospitality Executive since 2017. His earlier career included roles in operations and/or information technology at prominent South African hotel chains, including Southern Sun Hotels, Picardi Hotels, Protea Hotels and Legacy Hotels.



David Frost

Director on the Board of the Tourism Business Council of South Africa

With 21 years' executive experience in tourism strategy, David is an economist by training. He has held leadership roles at The Premier Group, Tourvest and served as Special Advisor on Tourism to government ministers. In 2001, he founded the Tourism Strategy Company, consulting widely across the private sector and SADC countries, notably leading Namibia's successful tourism strategy from 2003 to 2007. David has also advised the World Travel & Tourism Council for Africa and sits on the boards of the Tourism Business Council of South Africa, the Tourism Conservation Fund, and South African Tourism. He has led SATSA since 2013.



Michael Hagemann

FEDHASA / African Sky

Michael Hagemann is a hospitality executive whose career has been shaped by hands-on operational experience and strategic leadership. As Director of African Sky Hotels & Resorts, he oversees business growth and hotel operations across multiple properties. He also serves on the FEDHASA Inland Board, where he supports initiatives that strengthen South Africa's tourism and hospitality sectors.



Miguel Martins

SASTRA

Miguel Martins is a Johannesburg-based property investor, entrepreneur, speaker and community builder with a passion for helping others create wealth through property. A former banker, he has successfully transitioned into real estate investing, specialising in short-term accommodation, multi-let strategies and hospitality-led property ventures. He is the founder of Encasa Villas and Apartments and an Airbnb Superhost, recognised for delivering high-quality guest experiences and sustainable investment returns.



Committed to sharing practical knowledge and inspiring aspiring investors, Miguel is an active speaker and mentor within the property investment community. He completed executive education at the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) and attended Hyde Park High School in Johannesburg. Through his work, he continues to champion entrepreneurship, financial independence and the transformative potential of strategic property investment.

Shaun Lamont

VOASA / Managing Director, First Group

Shaun Lamont is the Managing Director of First Group, bringing over 25 years of experience in the hospitality and leisure industry. A Bachelor of Accounting Science graduate from UNISA, he combines strong financial acumen with extensive operational and commercial expertise. Shaun leads a diverse portfolio of hotels, resorts and leisure properties across South Africa, Namibia and the United Kingdom. Known for his forward-thinking and guest-focused leadership, he is passionate about innovation, developing people and driving sustainable growth while creating exceptional experiences that deliver lasting value for guests, employees and stakeholders.



14:45 – 16:00 PANEL DISCUSSION 4

Our need to prepare for the new reality of changing weather systems, managing risk and cover, linked to sustainability and environmental grading requirements, and how we manage to fund these requirements.

FACILITATOR:

Dimitri Syrris: *Baotree*

PANELISTS:

Nick Konstandoudakis: *SATIB*

Deborah O'Connor: *BDO*

Fabio Nava: *CBRE Excellerate*

Carl Coetzee: *ERO*

Dimitri Syrris

Chief Executive Officer, Baotree

Dimitri Syrris is the Founder and CEO of Baotree, a technology platform enabling tourism organisations and non-profits to track, verify, and report measurable sustainability impact. Since founding Baotree in 2020, Dimitri has grown the platform to support more than 78 destinations across 12 countries, including work in disaster risk assessment, early warning systems, and community-based data collection across Southern and East Africa.

Before Baotree, Dimitri spent over a decade in London's Ad-Tech sector, applying big data, analytics, and machine learning to solve problems at scale. Born and raised in Durban, South Africa, he has since taken his path across Kenya, Botswana, South Africa, and the UK, spending 14 years living and working at the intersection of technology, tourism, and community.

That combination shapes how he approaches resilience: as infrastructure that must serve people, place, and business together, or it serves no one. Dimitri has engaged with platforms including the YPO Global Impact Summit and the Sustainable Tourism Africa Summit, and speaks on disaster preparedness, community-led development, and holistic tourism sustainability, grounded in Baotree's own ground-truth data across the sector.

He now lives in Hoedspruit, on the edge of Kruger National Park, close to the landscapes and communities his work is built to protect.

Nick Konstandoudakis

Senior Account Executive & General Manager, SATIB

Nick Konstandoudakis is a Senior Account Executive and General Manager at SATIB Insurance Brokers, Southern Africa's leading specialist hospitality and tourism insurance broker. With extensive experience advising hotels, lodges, resorts, guesthouses, tourism operators and commercial businesses, Nicholas specialises in risk management, insurance programme design, business interruption, liability, cyber risk and catastrophe resilience.

Working closely with some of Africa's leading hospitality brands and independent operators, he helps businesses identify emerging risks, protect their balance sheets and build long-term resilience in an increasingly complex operating environment. His expertise includes the impact of severe weather events, climate-related exposures, changing insurance markets and the role of risk management in supporting sustainable growth.

Nick is passionate about translating complex insurance and risk concepts into practical business solutions and is a regular contributor to industry discussions on risk, resilience and the future sustainability of the hospitality sector.

Deborah O'Connor

BDO

Deborah O'Connor is a sustainability, climate and conservation professional with more than 20 years of experience helping organisations integrate sustainability into strategy, governance, operations and investment decisions across Africa and the Middle East. Her expertise spans ESG strategy, climate resilience, sustainable tourism, conservation governance, community development and impact measurement, with experience across the tourism, conservation, healthcare, infrastructure, energy, real estate and financial services sectors.

Deborah brings a unique combination of hands-on tourism operations experience and executive-level sustainability advisory. Having started her career in Botswana's safari industry and later managing hospitality operations in the Seychelles and South Africa, she developed a deep appreciation for the relationship between tourism, conservation, community wellbeing and long-term economic sustainability. She has since advised organisations on sustainability strategy, climate and nature-related risks, ESG performance, stakeholder engagement and sustainable development, helping translate complex sustainability challenges into practical, measurable outcomes.

She is passionate about advancing nature-positive tourism and building resilient destinations that create value for both people and the environment. Deborah is a strong advocate for integrating climate action, conservation, community empowerment and responsible tourism practices to ensure the sector continues to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Fabio Nava

CBRE Excellerate

Fabio Nava is the Director of Advisory & Transaction Services for Sub-Saharan Africa at CBRE Excellerate, with 18 years' experience in real estate and finance across key African markets. Previously Vice President for Hotels and Hospitality at JLL, he specialises in debt and equity advisory and transactional services. He has led major assignments for high-net-worth individuals, family offices, REITs, pension funds and other real estate investors. Fabio's diverse client portfolio includes international hotel groups, global corporates, and financiers such as IDC, IFC, Unilever, Nedbank, and Roche.

Carl Coetzee

Business Manager,

Environmental Resource Optimisers (ERO)

Carl Coetzee is the Business Manager at Environmental Resource Optimisers (ERO), a leader in environmental management services supporting approximately 40% of South Africa's hospitality beds. With over a decade of experience in finance, taxation, and strategic business planning, Carl integrates financial resilience with sustainability imperatives. At ERO, he helps clients navigate the realities of changing weather systems, risk management, and environmental grading requirements, while developing strategies that balance operational efficiency with long-term sustainability. His work spans investment-grade audits, eco-grading frameworks, and bespoke Sustainable Environmental Management Programs (SEMP), positioning him as a trusted voice on how organizations can adapt, fund, and thrive in a shifting climate landscape.



