

New Brands

Russell to partner with Indian group on new company, brands

November 15, 2010
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Hotel and Motel Management

NEW YORK CITY — At a press breakfast at the International Hotel/Motel & Restaurant Show, former AH&LA chairman John Russell revealed a new partnership with Auromatrix Group of India and hospitality veterans David Young, Chris Jones and David Klein to launch two yet-to-be-named lifestyle brands, one four-star and one three-star, with their new company Advaya Hospitality.

The brands will launch simultaneously in the U.S. and India starting in the second quarter of 2011, and will continue to debut in cities worldwide including Miami; Atlanta; Phoenix; Chennai, India; Tuticorin, India; Kakinada, India; Vizag, India; and Veilore, soon after. The third phase will launch properties in China, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Brazil.

Advaya, meaning "unique" in Sanskrit, will be more than a lifestyle brand, Russell said. It will merge all aspects of hospitality in one multifaceted platform including land acquisitions, development, design, construction, hotel management and tech support.

Advaya's parent company, Auromatrix, is led by founder, chairman, and CEO Kumar Sitaraman as well as members of his senior executive team, Udday Kumar Krishnan, Shekar Sitaraman, Krishnan Sitaraman and Bala Kamalakarhan.

Russell explained that both of the new brands are designed to be franchiseable, with the U.S. properties focusing on conversions projects, while those in India will primarily be new builds.

Chris Jones, co-founder with Russell of NYLO Hotels and principal and CDO of Advaya Hospitality, said the company plans to spend \$75,000 a key excluding land, offering a Bauhaus-inspired loft architecture at a price point a notch below NYLO's boutique brand.

"I just got back from Brazil, which has 10 percent of the hotels the U.S. has, and only 8 percent of those are branded," Jones said. "We think there is a tremendous opportunity in Brazil. We will be targeting the mid-market."

Jones also outlined the unique food and beverage department Advaya will feature, offering a tremendous amount of flexibility for potential developers and owners.

"The food and beverage will be in a separate area in an annex to the hotel which will run independently," Jones said. "It can be scaled down to the size of a coffee shop and deli to a four-service lounge and restaurant opportunity functioning as an independent destination - without affecting the overall cost or aesthetics of the hotel."

As part of Advaya's initiatives, the company will oversee all Auromatrix's hospitality businesses including India-based Sparsa Resorts as well as as Urbanedge Hotels in Chennai and Bengaluru.

"I don't care if you are in North America or India—there are common threads of what people want," said Jones. "People are looking for something new and I still think we can improve on what's out there because it hasn't been looked at from a global perspective."

What guestroom technology will be obsolete in 10 years?

- PBX phone systems
- PTACs
- Clock radios/clock iPod docks
- Pay-per-view television
- Other (please indicate your answer in the comments section below the poll results)

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