

## **Global Hotel Alliance hosts first member CEO meeting in China; Alliance to have 24 hotels operating in China in 2008;**

Shanghai, 26<sup>th</sup> November 2007. Global Hotel Alliance (GHA), the world's largest alliance of independent hotel chains, is holding its bi-annual CEO meeting for the first time in China at the end of November, hosted by the recently-opened Skyway Landis Hotel in Shanghai. GHA is making the most of the presence of its CEOs in China to host customer events in Shanghai and Beijing, as it embarks on a major effort to capitalise on the growing internal and outbound Chinese market.

GHA already boasts 19 member hotels in China (10 Kempinski, 2 Landis, 5 Marco Polo, 2 Pan Pacific) and GHA now has more hotels in China than in any other country, apart from the United States. A further 5 hotels will open in 2008.

Christopher Hartley, GHA's CEO, who is leading the meetings and events in China, is thrilled about the prospects for GHA in China. "All of our member brands recognise the potential for China to become one of the most important travel markets in the world. Already four of our seven brand members have a presence in China and the others are seeking opportunities; but China also represents huge outbound potential for our members and that is why our CEOs all wanted to hold a meeting in China, so they could witness first-hand the extraordinary developments in this dynamic country."

Stanley Yen, The Landis Group's President, is proud to be hosting the GHA CEOs at his newest hotel in Shanghai: "For The Landis, this is the perfect opportunity to show-case our newly-opened luxury hotel in Shanghai, but more importantly to offer my CEO-colleagues the unique opportunity to discover how much China has to offer their hotel groups, both in terms of new hotel development and of course in terms of a massively-expanding hotel customer base".

Micros-Fidelio is GHA's technology partner, and Stefan Piringier their President for Asia-Pacific and Chairman of GHA already knows how important China has become for the hotel business over the last decade: "Micros is the leading provider of technology to the hospitality industry in China and through our relationship with GHA, we have been able to help member hotels capitalise on the growing "on-line" market by offering state-of-the-art technology to power their web-sites and reservations systems. On-line bookings from Asia, and China in particular, have for some members doubled in 2007 and we only see this revenue growth continuing in the years ahead."

Still only three-years-old, GHA has grown from four to seven member brands in 2007, but Christopher Hartley expects that number to grow further in 2008. "GHA already has excellent coverage in Asia and especially in China, but Europe, South America and Australasia are still under-represented in our alliance, so we will be bringing in new members from these regions.

GHA's goal is to enable small and mid-size hotel brands to compete with the mega-chains and these joint events in China demonstrate the sort of value that GHA can bring its members by combining resources to tackle a huge new market like China, which would be too big and expensive for a small brand to reach on their own."

### **About Global Hotel Alliance**

Global Hotel Alliance currently comprises 7 luxury brands encompassing 148 upscale and luxury hotels with over 49,000 rooms in 39 different countries. Each brand is a key player in their main region of operation: Kempinski in Europe, Middle East and Africa, Omni in North America, Pan Pacific in the Pacific Rim, The Leela Group in India, Dusit in Thailand, Landis in Taiwan and China, and Marco Polo in China and Hong Kong. GHA will continue to grow to include selected hotel brands in those regions not currently covered by the alliance.

[www.globalhotelalliance.com](http://www.globalhotelalliance.com)

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