

2023 HSMAI SPECIAL REPORT

**HSMAI Top 25 Extraordinary
Minds in Sales, Marketing,
Revenue Optimization
and Distribution**

Inspiring Transformation and Creativity in Hospitality



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INTRODUCTION



By Robert A. Gilbert, CHME, CHBA

President and CEO,
Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI)

It is with great pleasure that I present HSMAI's Top 25 Extraordinary Minds of 2023. These exceptional individuals have left their mark on our industry, demonstrating unwavering commitment, creativity, and innovation. Their contributions have not only elevated their organizations but have also inspired us all. We celebrate these leaders in sales, marketing, revenue optimization, and distribution across hospitality, travel, and tourism organizations. As we read through the profiles of these hospitality superstars, we find inspiration in their work ethic, drive, and leadership. Congratulations to the Top 25 Extraordinary Minds!



Maddi Bourgerie

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

RVshare



Maddi is a multidisciplinary creative strategist who has a passion for growing and scaling businesses in the travel industry. Her career has been primarily focused on brand-building through powerful storytelling. She currently leads a brand team at RVshare, a leading RV rental website backed by private equity giant KKR. Maddi joined the company in 2019 and helped scale the business 10x in a few short years. In her role as Sr. Director of Communications, she oversees brand strategy, communications, PR, social, and content. Under her leadership, RVshare has partnered with mega-brands like Mattel’s Barbie, CAMP, and Elon Musk’s Starlink. She is also the brand’s lifestyle spokesperson and can be found doing TV and podcast interviews across the country.

Over the past 10 years, Maddi has spent her career in the travel industry with a focus on peer-to-peer marketplaces. Her prior role was at Expedia’s Vrbo. In 2021, she was named a Phocuswright Younger Leader, a nomination given to a select group of emerging leaders in the travel industry. Maddi has also been named a Top Women in Communications in 2021 and a PR News Top Women in PR in 2020.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Maddi was integral in scaling RVshare 10x in a few short years, elevating the brand through powerful storytelling and strategic partnerships.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

“Maddi’s innovative approach to brand-building and her ability to elevate RVshare through strategic partnerships have made her a key figure in the travel industry.”

Q&A with Maddi Bourgerie

What advice would you give to your younger self?

The three things I would share with my younger self are relationships matter, so grow your network. Relationships in marketing can open doors, offer insights, and create opportunities that you might not expect. Data is your friend. Learn to love data analytics. Understanding metrics and data-driven decision-making will set you apart. Creativity and strategy go hand in hand. Creativity is essential, but tying it to a solid strategy is what brings results. Balance the two to create impactful campaigns.

What keeps you inspired?

The challenge of solving complex problems, the constant learning that comes with leadership, and the chance to shape a vision that others can rally behind all keep me inspired. I enjoy empowering others, fostering growth, and creating an environment where everyone can thrive.

Nick Breedlove

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JACKSON COUNTY
NC Tourism Development Authority



Nick Breedlove, a distinguished leader in tourism, has significantly impacted the industry with his innovative strategies and expertise. Once the youngest elected Mayor in North Carolina, he later became the Executive Director of the Jackson County Tourism Development Authority in 2015. Under his leadership, the destination thrived, generating nearly \$500 million annually in visitor spending. He has been honored with the 'Tourism Office of the Year' award by the Southeast Tourism Society and a national 'Rising Star' award in Tourism Research.

Nick holds multiple certifications, including Travel Marketing Professional and Certified Destination Management Executive. He is also a certified expert in Crisis Management, Communications, and Recovery Strategy for DMOs. His commitment to diversity and inclusion is evident in his achievement as the first graduate to receive the Certified Diversity Travel Professional credential from Travel Unity.

An influential thought leader, Nick is an alumnus of the N.C. Rural Center's Economic Development Institute and serves on several boards, including the Blue Ridge Parkway Association and Western Carolina University's Hospitality and Tourism program.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

"Nick's innovative strategies and expertise have significantly impacted the tourism industry, making him a distinguished leader in the field."

Q&A with Nick Breedlove

What advice would you give to your younger self?

I would advise my younger self to embrace change and the unexpected, both in my personal and professional life. Recent years have underscored the importance of adaptability; resilience is rooted in accepting that change is not just inevitable, but also an opportunity for growth. It's crucial to build a network of individuals who complement your strengths and weaknesses, forming an environment where everyone grows stronger together. Lastly - never stop learning!

What keeps you inspired?

The peers I have in the industry are a constant source of inspiration. Every day, I am astounded by the creativity and ingenuity of my colleagues, as well as their eagerness to assist and share knowledge collaboratively.

Gretta Brooks

CEO & FOUNDER

SalesBoost



Gretta Brooks, CEO and founder of SalesBoost, LLC, is a distinguished entrepreneur known for launching SalesBoost’s innovative soft skill training platform in 2018. This unique platform offers on-demand role-playing simulations with instant feedback, benefiting learners worldwide in various industries, including hospitality and higher education. Brooks plays a vital role in shaping company culture, managing investor relations, and driving future growth innovations.

Renowned for her expertise in innovation, women in leadership, and sales effectiveness, Brooks holds three US patents and has received numerous accolades in the hospitality and technology sectors. Her passion for resolving workplace challenges with creative tech solutions has established her as a respected technology entrepreneur and inventor.

Brooks actively contributes to the academic community, serving on the boards of Cornell’s Center for Innovative Hospitality Labor and Employment Relations and the University of North Texas College of Merchandising, Hospitality, and Tourism Advancement Board. Outside her professional sphere, she is an avid fly fisher, enjoys learning about history and traveling around the globe with her family.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Gretta has received numerous accolades for her expertise in innovation, leadership, and sales effectiveness and holds three US patents.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

“Gretta’s passion for resolving workplace challenges with creative tech solutions has established her as a respected technology entrepreneur and inventor.”

Shannon Cummings

GLOBAL BRAND MARKETING MANAGER

Hyatt Hotels Corporation



As a Global Brand Marketing Manager for Hyatt, Shannon strives to bring the stories of Hyatt's Independent Collection brands to life for travelers, inspiring new audiences to experience and champion these amazing brands. With over 10 years of experience in marketing strategy, digital media, brand activations and brand management, Shannon has added value and driven impact across the travel, hospitality, and F&B sectors for clients such as Uber Technologies Inc., Choice Hotels International, Berkshire Hathaway Travel Protection, Visit Oklahoma City, Santa Monica Travel & Tourism and Sonic Drive-In. When she's not traveling, she's either dreaming of her next trip or working to find presence on her yoga mat.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Successfully elevated brand awareness and engagement for Hyatt's Independent Collection through innovative digital marketing strategies.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

"Shannon's strategic approach to storytelling and brand activation has significantly enhanced the visibility and appeal of Hyatt's Independent Collection."

Q&A with Shannon Cummings

What advice would you give to your younger self?

I would tell my younger self to prioritize authenticity over perfection. As I've grown in my career and witnessed amazing leadership from some inspiring mentors and supervisors, I've more fully realized the value, and even the necessity, of bringing your authentic self to the workplace, aligning your career path with your values, admitting (and even celebrating) your mistakes and failures, being unafraid to ask questions and admit when you don't know the answer, and not forgetting to bring levity, humor and joy to your work. We work in travel, an industry that brings so much good into the world, so I would remind my younger self that the work will get done and to enjoy the ride!

What keeps you inspired?

I am so inspired by travel, specifically the empathy that it builds, the connection it creates, the adventure it promises, the joy it inspires, and the transformative experiences that it brings. Travel gives us the opportunity to experience unique and often remarkable moments that change our perception of the world, allow us to better understand others and ourselves and give us the gift of creating memories that stay with us and positively impact our lives moving forward. I feel so lucky to work within an industry that can deliver such a life-affirming gift and that inspires me every single day. And I think it's also imperative to remember that travel can be to a far-off place, but it also just be walking down the street to your favorite hometown coffee shop and connecting with a friend. Inspiration comes to those who get out into the world and seek it!

Jamari Douglas

VP MARKETING, PR & COMMUNICATIONS

Bermuda Tourism Authority



Jamari Douglas boasts an impressive professional journey spanning well over a decade in the marketing, PR, and communications industries. Now serving as the Vice President of Marketing, Public Relations, and Communications at Bermuda Tourism Authority, Jamari's story is a testament to his unwavering commitment to personal and professional growth. Since joining the industry as an intern 20 years ago, Jamari's career trajectory has been nothing short of remarkable. He has continually honed his skills, demonstrated exceptional leadership, and climbed the corporate ladder to get to where he is today.

Jamari also has a thirst for knowledge and a continued investment in expanding his knowledge in the field of Marketing and is preparing to graduate with his MBA this December from New York University's Stern School of Business.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Over the past 14 months, Jamari's leadership has been characterized by a series of groundbreaking initiatives that have propelled Bermuda's visitors and online traction to new heights.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

He has quickly become a mentor to our team and has encouraged and pushed us to challenge our thinking when it comes to bringing him creative ideas. My team has been inspired through witnessing Jamari's remarkable leadership and forward-thinking mindset. He leads with knowledge and optimism, which translates into success across his team. His love for and dedication to his work and Bermuda is palpable.

Mark Fancourt

CO-FOUNDER & PRINCIPAL
TRAVHOTECH



Mark Fancourt's international career in the hospitality and travel industry spans three decades, characterized by a progressive and globally informed approach. Serving as a forward-thinking corporate hotelier, technology provider, and management consultant, Fancourt consistently embraces innovation with a proactive mindset toward enablement and change. His brainchild, TRAVHOTECH, encapsulates this ethos by integrating business and technology expertise, providing clients with a dynamic competitive edge in the market.

Fancourt's executive leadership roles at renowned establishments such as MGM Resorts, Micros Fidelio, Pan Pacific, and Qantas not only underscore his commitment to pushing industry boundaries but also highlight his capacity to instigate positive change at an organizational level. His extensive global experience positions him as a strategic visionary adept at navigating the complexities of the ever-evolving industry landscape.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Mark has been pivotal in driving innovation and strategic thinking in hospitality technology, significantly impacting the industry's evolution.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

"Fancourt's forward-thinking and expertise have positioned TRAVHOTECH as a leading consultancy in hospitality technology."

Q&A with Mark Fancourt

What keeps you inspired?

The perpetual evolution of the travel and hospitality technology landscape fuels my enthusiasm, presenting a myriad of new possibilities each day. Embracing the constant change, I find joy in steering away from routine and exploring the vast array of challenges and innovations. My passion lies in leveraging thought leadership to not only navigate this dynamic terrain but also to actively contribute to the improvement of business environments within the industry.

Michael Feldman

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF REVENUE MANAGEMENT AND DISTRIBUTION

Atrium Hospitality



Michael Feldman has over 30 years of hotel experience with 25 years in a revenue generating position. More than 20 years of that time was spent at Hyatt where Feldman was one of the company's original regional directors of revenue management when the discipline was formalized for Hyatt in 2004. For 10 years he supported the revenue management, pricing and distribution strategy for hotels and resorts in the United States, Canada and the Caribbean. In April 2014, Feldman became a regional vice president of sales & marketing for Hyatt. In his most recent assignment, Feldman supported 30 hotels generating more than \$1.5 billion in top line revenue. In 2020, Michael had the opportunity to return to his first love (revenue management) and joined Atrium Hospitality as Senior Vice President of Revenue Management and Distribution. He's responsible for the revenue management, eCommerce, business travel and contract sales efforts as well as the enterprise wide reservations function for Atrium.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Michael has played a critical role in enhancing Atrium's revenue management strategies, leading to significant gains in profitability and market share.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

"Feldman's expertise and innovative approach to revenue management have been transformative for Atrium Hospitality."

Anja Fiedler

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, REVENUE MANAGEMENT INTEGRATION

Fairmont Hotels & Resorts



With an extensive Hospitality career spanning over two decades, managing and supporting properties ranging from 75 to 1048 rooms, Anja Fiedler has been a driving force in Revenue Management (RM). Renowned for her expertise in fostering a robust RM culture within Accor and Fairmont, she has reshaped standards, trained teams, and focused on maximizing resources to propel top-line revenue and profitability, while keeping service delivery and employee impact in line of sight. She serves on the HSMAI Americas RM Advisory board, contributing to finding solutions to current industry challenges, and specifically supporting certification alignment with evolving trends.

Anja joined the Accor and Fairmont Corporate office via Swissôtel New York and later Swissôtel Chicago, after working for InterContinental Hotels and Resorts in Berlin and New York City. She completed CRME and CHBA certifications, and holds a degree in Hospitality Management from Emil Fischer Staatliche Fachschule Berlin, Germany.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Fiedler has been key in orchestrating successful hotel openings and optimizing revenue management and distribution disciplines across Fairmont properties.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

“Anja’s dedication to excellence in revenue management and her ability to foster a culture of learning and growth have made her a respected leader in the industry.”

Q&A with Anja Fiedler

What advice would you give to your younger self?

You will find your passion, it’s a journey. Don’t hesitate to take opportunities to do something you have not done before. Plan time in your day/month or year to focus on learning something new. Follow your curiosity, you may uncover interests you did not know you had. Find time to do the things you enjoy, and all of these little steps along the way will help you find a place in life that you appreciate.

What keeps you inspired?

I enjoy helping others. Ideally teaching someone to help themselves, but also taking away a burden or providing support to someone in need, brainstorming with others for ideas, or mentoring someone to help them find their own solutions. Putting yourself into someone else’s shoes always gives a different perspective and appreciation for others around us.

Matthew Guglielmetti

DECISION ANALYTICS MANAGER

ZS



Matt has over 20 years of Revenue Management experience, working globally across all brand tiers. Currently, he is an Associate Principal in ZS Associate's Travel and Hospitality practice, specializing in Revenue Management operations, systems design, and deployment, change management, analytics, and reporting. Prior to ZS, Matt served as Executive Director of Revenue Management Systems & Tools at MGM Resorts International where he led the design and deployment of a first in gaming Revenue Management System. He has also led Revenue Management Systems and Top Line Analytics teams at Marriott International and Starwood Hotels & Resorts. At Marriott, he led the team that provided ongoing quantitative and qualitative analysis of hotel revenue trends across Marriott's global portfolio. At Starwood, he led the team of revenue management experts that provided strategic and business support to all properties globally. His team also was responsible for the design and global implementation of Starwood's next generation RMS.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

At ZS, Matthew has been pivotal in developing revenue management solutions that drive significant growth and operational efficiency for global hospitality brands.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

"Guglielmetti's innovative approach to revenue management analytics has transformed the strategies of leading hotel brands."

Theodore Holloway, CHDM

**SENIOR DIRECTOR LOYALTY,
CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT**

BWH Hotels



Theo is a seasoned professional in the hospitality industry with a wealth of experience in loyalty, marketing, and revenue management strategies. With a career spanning over 20 years, Theo has honed his expertise while working with hotel brands such as BWH Hotels and Hilton, in addition to third party operators Remington Hotels and Westmont.

As the Senior Director of Loyalty and Customer Engagement, Theo has consistently demonstrated a deep understanding of the intricate dynamics of emotional loyalty and its pivotal role with enhancing guest experiences and driving business growth. Leveraging his comprehensive knowledge of the hospitality industry, he has successfully crafted and implemented innovative loyalty program changes that have proven to be instrumental in attracting, retaining, and delighting customers.

Theo holds a Bachelor's in Communication from the University of Colorado Boulder, providing him with a solid foundation in business management and marketing. He remains committed to staying at the forefront of hospitality and loyalty trends and continuously expanding his knowledge to deliver innovative and transformative solutions.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Thanks in large part to Theo's efforts, revenue from email in 2023 is up 85% over 2019 and up 16% over a record-setting 2022. Unique accounts are up 43% and 10% respectively, also setting all-time records. Email open rates, click-to-open rates, and average revenue per email have all continued to climb under Theo's careful supervision. This growth has contributed to record revenue for the Best Western Rewards program, ahead of 2019 and 2022. The launch of the CDP in Q3 2023, testing multiple use cases, will prove invaluable to this continued growth trajectory and would not have been possible without Theo's continued leadership throughout the project.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

Theo embodies the spirit of this award and HSMAI. He supports innovation, fosters creativity, and personifies tenacity. He is an asset to every team he's been a part of and a consummate leader. With a volunteer spirit he is active in his community and has been a leader in HSMAI as well as in other organizations. When I think of a Top 25 mind in marketing and revenue optimization, I think of Theo Holloway.

Lisa Jordan

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL MARKETING

Red Roof



An experienced marketing & communications leader in travel and hospitality, Lisa Jordan is Senior Director of Digital Marketing for Red Roof, a leading economy hotel brand. Her professional background includes nearly 20 years of brand development, marketing strategy and implementation, team leadership and e-commerce in travel. Previously she served on the executive leadership team at Hostelling International USA as Vice President of Marketing. She held several positions during a prior 10-year tenure at Sabre Hospitality Solutions.

Lisa serves on the HSMAI Marketing Advisory Board, the HSMAI Washington DC chapter Marketing Communications Committee, and volunteers for Women in Travel THRIVE. Recently, Lisa has spoken on conference panels for the Digital Travel Summit, Digital Travel Connect, and Women in Travel THRIVE.

She earned her Master of Tourism Administration from the George Washington University. In 2022, Lisa was honored by her graduate program with an Outstanding Alumni Award for Alumni Leadership.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Transformed Red Roof's digital marketing approach, significantly increasing online visibility and direct bookings.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

"Lisa's innovative strategies and leadership in digital marketing have driven remarkable growth and brand loyalty for Red Roof."

Barbara Karasek

CEO

Paradise Advertising and Marketing, Inc.



Purpose-driven with global influences, Barbara lived in eight countries and traveled to more than 20 countries while leading global marketing, entertainment, licensing, and operations for SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, PGA TOUR, NASCAR, USOPC, and a prominent hip-hop clothing manufacturer. She has negotiated nearly \$500 million in global marketing and partnership contracts.

She graduated from Furman University where she played Division I volleyball, served as Team Captain, and holds many records and honors. She earned an M.A. from the University of South Florida and is Six Sigma Certified and completed Harvard Business School Strategic Marketing Management courses.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

“Barbara’s leadership and innovative marketing strategies have significantly impacted the tourism and hospitality sectors.”

Q&A with Barbara Karasek

What advice would you give to your younger self?

Dear younger self,

I want to share some advice with you that I wish someone had reinforced more when I was in your shoes. First and foremost, always remember the importance of purpose. Find what truly drives you and fuels your passion. When you align your work with a sense of purpose, it becomes more than just a job - it becomes a calling.

Stewardship is another key aspect to focus on. As you navigate through your career, remember that leadership is not just about personal success, but also about the responsibility to positively impact others and the world around you. Use your position to create meaningful change and contribute to the greater good.

Never compromise on your core values. In times of uncertainty or when faced with difficult decisions, let your values be your guiding light. Stay true to who you are and what you believe in, even if it means taking the road less traveled.

Don’t be afraid to take risks and step outside of your comfort zone. Growth often comes from embracing new challenges and pushing beyond perceived limitations. Anticipate and embrace failures as learning opportunities rather than setbacks.

Furthermore, always strive for community benefit. Remember that success is not solely measured by financial gains or personal achievements; it’s also about how many lives you have touched and changed for the better. Make a conscious effort to give back and make a positive difference in the lives of those around you.

Last, embrace change with open arms. The world is constantly evolving, and as a leader, it’s crucial to adapt and stay ahead of the curve. Embrace new technologies, ideas, and ways of doing things that can enhance both your personal growth and professional development.

Believe in yourself, trust your instincts, and never stop learning. The journey ahead may be challenging at times but remember that every obstacle presents an opportunity for growth.

Wishing you all the best on this incredible journey called life.

Sincerely,

Your future self

What keeps you inspired?

I love being inspired! There isn’t a day that I do not find joy and admiration in so many things and people. As a child of educators, learning is in my DNA, and I consider myself a student of life-long learning by constantly reading all kinds of books, articles, and management reports. Every day I learn something new and inspirational from my husband, family, colleagues, and Paradise teammates and clients. To wit, as a female leader in business, two primary words come to mind that inspire my heart and thinking: HOPE and TOMORROW.

Jeffrey LeFrancois

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Meatpacking District
Management Association



As Executive Director, LeFrancois is ultimately responsible for overseeing all the BID's activities and reports directly to the Board of Directors. He works to ensure the Meatpacking District remains a cutting-edge, ever-evolving neighborhood in Lower Manhattan with thriving retail, commercial, and residential communities supported with strong public assets.

A graduate of Pace University in Lower Manhattan and from a small business family, his enthusiasm for New York City, culture, and community align with the mission and work of the Meatpacking District. He previously worked as Chief of Staff and Deputy Chief of Staff to then-Council Member Corey Johnson and Assembly Member Richard Gottfried, respectively.

LeFrancois is currently a board member of the NYC BID Managers Association, advocating for issues of importance to the City's 76 BIDs and to the thousands of businesses they represent. He also serves as Chair of Manhattan Community Board 4, and is on the board of Housing Conservation Coordinators, Stonewall Democrats of NYC, and the Hudson River Park Advisory Council.

Jeffrey's distinctive coiffure is second only to his effervescent energy. Some of his favorite things in life include cooking and entertaining guests, traveling and pointing out neat urban planning attributes to his partner, perusing galleries and museums, long-distance domestic train travel, throwing pottery, sipping cortados, and enjoying very cold vodka Gibsons.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Enhanced the district's public assets and community engagement, fostering a vibrant urban environment.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

"Jeffrey's strategic vision and community-first approach have transformed the Meatpacking District into a top destination for both locals and visitors."

Stephanie Leger

CHIEF EXCELLENCE OFFICER

First Rate Hospitality



Stephanie Leger is the Chief Excellence Officer at First Rate Hospitality. She brings over two decades of global hotel industry experience. Her custom program, focused on integrating sales and marketing seamlessly with front-of-house operations, has been implemented in locations such as the Dominican Republic, New York, Las Vegas, Miami, Cape Cod, and Cancun, resulting in remarkable outcomes. A trailblazer in the field, Stephanie has trained over 20,000 hospitality professionals worldwide, conducting comprehensive operational evaluations that have become the benchmark for excellence. Beyond her prolific training endeavors, she co-hosts the immensely popular WTF! “Walk The Floors” hospitality training podcast.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Instrumental in establishing First Rate Hospitality as a leader in luxury hospitality services.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

“Stephanie’s visionary approach and dedication to service excellence have set a new standard in the hospitality industry.”

Q&A with Stephanie Leger

What advice would you give to your younger self?

If I were to offer advice to my younger self, it would be to speak up more about the risks earlier in my hospitality journey and as I was taking them. In hindsight, I recognize the power of communication in fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship. Encouraging others to forge their paths and showcasing the highs and lows of my career choices can be a catalyst for empowering those around me. It’s a lesson in the significance of transparency and authenticity in shaping my success and contributing to a community of forward-thinking individuals.

What keeps you inspired?

Immersing myself in my surroundings has always been a profound source of inspiration. Whether it’s the ambiance of hotel lobbies, the dynamic atmosphere of airports, or the hustle and bustle of busy restaurants, I enjoy observing and absorbing the unique energy of diverse hospitality environments. Witnessing the distinct characteristics of various places worldwide and how they skillfully elevate the five senses fills me with a sense of wonder and appreciation. These moments of sensory richness fuel my passion and curiosity, driving me to explore and embrace the beauty of our diverse global hospitality landscape.

Tess McGoldrick

VICE PRESIDENT, TRAVEL & HOSPITALITY

Revenue Analytics



Tess McGoldrick is the Vice President for the Travel & Hospitality vertical at Revenue Analytics. In this role, she leads cross-functional teams to develop high-impact products that provide revenue growth for her customers. Having started her career at Revenue Analytics, Tess developed an expertise in Revenue Management from the best in the business. Tess' experience includes ensuring client satisfaction is achieved with all product implementations, from business process improvements to forecast predictions to actionable pricing recommendations. She drives the vision for N2Pricing, as well as the implementation & ongoing customer success for these customers. Prior to joining Revenue Analytics, Tess graduated from the Goizueta Business School at Emory University with a BBA concentration in Strategy & Management Consulting and Accounting.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Spearheaded the development of N2Pricing, improving pricing strategy and analytics for hospitality clients.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

“Tess’s innovative leadership and dedication to enhancing revenue management practices have made a significant impact.”

Q&A with Tess McGoldrick

What advice would you give to your younger self?

Don't be afraid to ask for help! The first six months of my career were rough. Coming out of business school I had an attitude that I was super smart and could figure anything out. Once I got over that ego and asked my (super smart) co-workers (who had already figured it out) for help, my learning curve shot up. The help I received accelerated how efficient I could be, gave me more time to do higher-value and more interesting work, and inspired me to pass along that same help as a coach and mentor later in my career.

What keeps you inspired?

I've never considered myself creative in the traditional sense – don't ask me to draw, paint, or write something. But, I consider myself a creative problem solver. With my work, I get to creatively problem solve nearly every day – and it's never the same 'problem' which certainly keeps things interesting. Whether it's designing a new feature that improves user experience, tackling how to incorporate a new data source into our analytics modules, or helping my team find ways to be more efficient with how we work – it's always fun! I've joked with people that N2Pricing is my third child. So like a true Mama Bear, what inspires me is continuing to see the product grow and provide value to the industry.

Raul Moronta

CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER

Remington Hotels



Raul Moronta is a seasoned hospitality executive with a career spanning over 25 years, currently serving as the Chief Commercial Officer at Remington Hospitality since 2020. Armed with an M.B.A. from the University of New Haven and a Bachelor's in Hotel & Restaurant Management from Pontificia Universidad Catolica Madre y Maestra, Moronta has excelled in leadership roles at prominent organizations, including Crescent Hotels & Resorts and Starwood Hotels & Resorts. His achievements include spearheading international expansions, achieving consecutive years of market share growth, and successfully integrating numerous hotels into portfolios, contributing significantly to overall growth.

Moronta's expertise extends to various facets of the hospitality industry, with a particular focus on revenue management, strategic implementation, and executive leadership. In addition to his corporate roles, Moronta has contributed to academia, serving as a professor at Johnson & Wales University and Newbury College. He holds certifications in hotel industry analytics and revenue management and is fluent in Spanish. Moronta's unique blend of academic insights, industry expertise, and strategic leadership positions him as a transformative force in the dynamic realm of hospitality management.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Successfully integrated numerous hotels into Remington's portfolio, enhancing overall growth and revenue.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

"Raul's strategic acumen and transformative leadership have been instrumental in Remington Hotels' success."

Q&A with Raul Moronta

What advice would you give to your younger self?

If I could offer advice to my younger self, I would emphasize the importance of prioritizing meaningful connections with friends and family. Additionally, I would stress the significance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle, incorporating activities like biking and running outdoors in my younger years as I have now. Having a sense of accomplishment and sharing it with those who I love creates a more harmonious and fulfilling life.

What keeps you inspired?

I find continual inspiration through my exploration of new travel destinations and my interactions with guests and colleagues from diverse backgrounds. These experiences help me stay curious to discover innovative ways to enhance our business. It helps me remain grounded, humble, and honest about my own capabilities and those of my team. This blend of diverse perspectives and a commitment to continuous improvement serves as a powerful source of motivation and creativity in our endeavors.

Vikram Pradhan

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

Wyndham Hotels & Resorts



Vikram serves as Senior Vice President, Revenue Management and Distribution, for Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, the world's largest hotel franchising company with approximately 9,100 hotels across 24 brands. In this role, he is responsible for maximizing revenue generating opportunities across Wyndham's diverse portfolio of brands with oversight for the Company's revenue management and distribution functions.

A hospitality industry veteran with more than 20 years of progressive experience, Vikram joined Wyndham in 2020 after leading revenue strategy for Convene, where he was Vice President, Revenue Management. Prior to Convene, he founded the luxury booking platform SuiteStory and before that, spent eight years with Starwood Hotels & Resorts.

Vikram holds MBAs from both Columbia University and the University of London and received his bachelor's degree in Hospitality Management from Johnson and Wales University.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Enhanced Wyndham's revenue management and distribution functions, driving significant revenue growth.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

"Vikram's innovative approach and leadership have contributed to Wyndham's position as a leader in the global hospitality market."

Ben Premack

COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR

Grand Wailea, a Waldorf Astoria Resort



As Grand Wailea’s Commercial Director, Ben Premack is responsible for designing and implementing the resort’s long-term commercial vision. His role encompasses leading the commercial side of major resort-wide projects, including his participation in Grand Wailea’s \$350 million transformation in 2023, as well as targeting and leveraging short- and medium-term incremental revenue opportunities. Among these are the resort’s 5,000-person membership program and its 50-villa residence program, both of which are led by Ben, who drives service initiatives, loyalty programming, and ancillary revenues using a combination of strategic thinking, tactical initiatives, and strong business acumen. In addition to these other responsibilities, Ben has direct oversight of Grand Wailea’s group and leisure sales, catering and events, and membership and residence ownership programs.

Before assuming his current role at Grand Wailea in 2021, Ben spent nearly two decades growing his hospitality career with a series of increasingly senior operational, sales, and commercial strategy roles at leading hotels across the United States. Ben holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Tourism Management from Indiana University at Bloomington and completed the Hotel Management and Owners Relations certificate program at Cornell University.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Played a key role in the resort’s \$350 million transformation, enhancing its luxury offerings and guest experiences.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

“Ben’s strategic vision and leadership have significantly elevated Grand Wailea’s commercial success.”

Q&A with Ben Premack

What advice would you give to your younger self?

Don’t ever forget to say THANK YOU! It takes a village to accomplish so many things in life, and while we may be recognized for individual accomplishments over our lives and careers, we should always appreciate those around us who helped us get there. To learn the art of appreciation at a young age is not an easy thing to do. If you could see where that takes you as a person and a professional in the future, I bet it could be learned very quickly.

What keeps you inspired?

Easy answer, watching my kids grow up! They have been lucky enough to be hotel kids since the day they were born. While in some situations it may come off as them being spoiled, or having unique access to things that others may not, I look at it differently. I see my son hold the elevator door for people getting on to the elevator, just like a hotelier. I hear my daughter greet everyone in the sales office and talk to them about when she is going to work at the front desk. To watch them grow into confident, polite, well-mannered human beings, just like others in our hotel industry, inspires me every day!

Michael Sherwood, CRME

**VICE PRESIDENT, REVENUE
MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

PTG Consulting



Michael J. Sherwood, CRME serves as the Vice President of Revenue Management Services at PTG Consulting, overseeing all revenue and distribution-related consulting services within the company's hospitality division, for which he played a key role to develop and launch in 2016. In his role, Michael provides comprehensive revenue management and distribution services including revenue-for-hire agreements, revenue management assessments, market feasibility and proformas, thorough multi-channel distribution audits, multi-level training programs, and various other revenue and distribution consulting projects.

In 2018, Michael introduced PTG Consulting Revenue Management Interactive Workshops, designed to impart core fundamentals and high-level strategic elements of revenue management to hotel in-house revenue teams. In addition, he has conducted revenue management and system training in multiple countries across North America, Europe, and Asia.

Michael's has dedicated a majority of his 38+ -year career in hospitality to the discipline of revenue management. In addition, his experience includes various on-property positions such as general manager and roles within accounting, front office, and housekeeping. He possesses a deep understanding of both full-service and limited-service operational procedures. Earlier in his career, Michael spent several years as a development analyst for Bristol Hotels and Resorts, where he was responsible for completing market feasibility studies and development proformas for new hotel acquisitions.

Michael earned his Revenue Management Certification through Cornell University in 2010, and has held the Certified Revenue Management Executive (CRME) designation from HSAMI since 2013.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Introduced Revenue Management Interactive Workshops, significantly improving revenue management skills across the hospitality industry.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

"Sherwood's depth of knowledge and innovative training programs have made a profound impact on the industry."

Katlyn Svendsen

GLOBAL PUBLIC RELATIONS & CONTENT SERVICES DIRECTOR

Travel South Dakota



Katlyn Svendsen, Global Public Relations & Content Services Director, has worked for Travel South Dakota since 2011. She takes a proactive approach working with the local, regional, national and international media to share news about South Dakota to inspire travel to the state through providing unique and interesting story angles for new visitors to discover. From inspiring visits with viral celebrities like Tariq, “The Corn Kid,” to building on relationships with media friends over the course of her career, she keeps South Dakota’s tourism industry and partners at the core of her work.

Her personal mission is to story tell in a way that evokes a feeling of wanderlust. Her team has touchpoints not only with media, but serving the overall marketing plan, and strategizing in the international marketing and media space.

She resides in Pierre with her husband and stays busy raising two very active and talented girls. She enjoys taking the road less traveled, boating on Lake Oahe, ATV trail riding in the Black Hills, motorcycle riding, and DIY projects on their acreage. Generally, put her in the outdoors and she’s all in.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Elevated South Dakota’s profile, leading to increased tourism and economic growth.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

“Katlyn’s visionary strategies have transformed South Dakota into a sought-after destination.”

Q&A with Katlyn Svendsen

What advice would you give to your younger self?

I have always leaned into the power of strong mentors in my life. I would encourage myself to dig even further into this resource. Finding someone who is younger than you (keep yourself young and learning!), in the same phase, an experienced leader, and finally, and most importantly, someone who is much older, retired, and sees the world in a completely different way. Having all of these perspectives from all phases of life gives a well-rounded resource that I can turn to for any challenge.

What keeps you inspired?

Truly the travel and tourism industry is one of the most energizing and inspiring industries. The constant innovation and keeping up with consumer trends keep all of us communicating regularly to strategize best practices. It in a positive and upbeat energy where we are not saving lives, but we are certainly changing them.

Scott Taylor

**VICE PRESIDENT, GLOBAL SALES
OPERATIONS & ENABLEMENT**
IHG Hotels & Resorts



Scott Taylor is Vice President, Global Sales Operations and Enablement for IHG's Global Sales Team. In his current role, Scott is responsible for both the strategic governance and tactical delivery of the B2B Marketing, B2B Tradeshows & Events, Sales Excellence, Sales Revenue Operations and Functional Sales Operations business units.

Since joining IHG in 2010, Scott has held various leadership positions in both Regional and Global Roles. In his nearly 14 years at IHG, Scott has developed a strong professional brand and is known for his ability to successfully deliver organizational initiatives, manage transformational change, and develop talent, helping both the organization and its people achieve their potential.

A 25-year veteran of the hospitality industry, Scott brings extensive on and off property experience to his role. Prior to joining IHG, Scott has enjoyed a cross-functional career in hospitality, having held positions in Meeting Planning, Group Sales, Catering Sales, Hospitality Training, Sales Automation, Sales Effectiveness, and Sales Operations.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Refined IHG's sales strategies, enhancing global sales performance.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

"Scott's leadership has seen remarkable advancements in sales operations at IHG."

Q&A with Scott Taylor

What advice would you give to your younger self?

Embrace the journey, invest in relationships, and prioritize self-care.

What keeps you inspired?

The desire to continuously learn and grow. For me, lifelong learning involves connecting with like-minded individuals, which can lead to new friendships and networking opportunities. Their journeys, achievements, and values motivate and inspire me.

Craig Trost

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Travel Wisconsin



Travel Wisconsin Communications Director Craig Trost is an experienced communications and public policy professional dedicated to making Wisconsin the best state in the country to play, live and work. A native of Manitowoc, Wisconsin, Trost graduated from UW-Oshkosh with a degree in journalism. For two decades, Trost has spent his career in public service, working for former Governor Jim Doyle and leading strategic communications and public policy efforts for several state lawmakers. Since 2019, Trost has led Travel Wisconsin's award-winning PR program that includes increasing Wisconsin's earned and social media content creator footprints, pioneering a public relations Co-Op program and integrating public relations into all major marketing campaigns. Trost currently resides in Madison.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Implemented strategic campaigns that enhanced Wisconsin's travel reputation.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

"Craig's strategic communications have significantly boosted Wisconsin's tourism industry."

Q&A with Craig Trost

What advice would you give to your younger self?

Be bold and go for it. Humble confidence is not arrogant and you don't need someone else's permission to do big things and be a difference-maker. When things don't work out your way, don't get discouraged, because failing forward is progress.

What keeps you inspired?

Personal growth keeps me inspired to try new things and reach new heights.

Julie Wagner

CEO

Beverly Hills Conference & Visitors Bureau



As CEO, Julie Wagner leads the Beverly Hills Conference & Visitors Bureau (BHCVB) and guides the strategy, development, and implementation of the office’s efforts in positioning Beverly Hills as a modern, glamorous, and world-class destination for those seeking the pinnacle of luxury. With more than 30 years of experience in hospitality marketing, Wagner directs BHCVB’s global marketing strategy currently focusing on the United States, UK, Australia, Mexico and the Middle East. Wagner has established and continues to promote BHCVB’s contemporary brand identity with the goal of using forward-thinking ideas to keep up with consumer and travel trends, and to help new audiences fall in love with Beverly Hills. With childhood memories in Beverly Hills, her heartfelt connection drives her highly-engaged marketing strategies for the City. Wagner’s efforts have encouraged tourism and commerce by providing unparalleled experiences while supporting local businesses and fostering innovations that entice visitors to return.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Led transformative marketing initiatives that reinforced Beverly Hills’ luxury status.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

“Julie’s leadership has significantly elevated Beverly Hills’ stature in the global tourism market.”

Q&A with Julie Wagner

What advice would you give to your younger self?

Don’t take any obstacles personally, and keep throwing ideas out there regardless of whether anyone is on board.

What keeps you inspired?

Being in the company of smart, creative people.

Donovan White

DIRECTOR

Jamaica Tourist Board



Donovan White was appointed Director of Tourism in February 2018, bringing to the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) over 25 years' experience as a senior executive in marketing and business development.

A strategist and business leader, he is responsible for promoting and further enhancing Jamaica's reputation as the premier destination in the global marketplace. He is keen on leveraging existing industry relationships with investors, hoteliers, visitors, and key stakeholders to help the JTB embrace the new global paradigm shifts in tourism.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Pushed Jamaica's marketing forward into fully embracing the digital world and helping it to exceed expectations. Donovan is not afraid to be different and we believe that is what makes him extraordinary.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

Jamaica has had unmatched success since re-opening from the pandemic, serving as a model for other destinations. In 2022, the destination surpassed the four million visitor mark recorded in 2019 and the expectation is for Jamaica to exceed those numbers in 2023, with year-to-date arrivals already ahead by 32%.

Additionally, visitor spending is up year over year by 21.8. In addition, Jamaica has launched new gateways, expanding its airlift beyond traditional east coast markets, and launching service from gateways such as Denver, Houston and beyond. The island's tourism infrastructure has continued to improve and put the destination in a position to compete beyond the region – making it a true international powerhouse in the travel world. Today, Jamaica is more than an island – it is a true country with a well-defined sense of place that embraces its cultural heritage, its personality and that of its people.

Donovan's campaigns have helped capture the soul of the island and utilized the ever-changing, ever-evolving digital space to tell stories in a compelling and effective way.

Vanessa Williams

GENERAL MANAGER,

The Vinoy Resort & Golf Club,
Marriott Autograph Collection



From South Korea to Beverly Hills, Vanessa Williams has traveled the globe, restoring and renovating luxury hotels. She has held the position of General Manager of The Vinoy Resort & Golf Club since early 2022. Given her immense experience in luxury hotel leadership and specialty in leading marketing campaigns, she was chosen to oversee the overall operations of the refined resort as it emerged from an extensive renovation.

Vanessa’s hospitality career has spanned nearly three decades, including a role in the renovation, relaunch and repositioning of the Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong along with time at Raffles L’Ermitage Beverly Hills, Sandy Lane Barbados and Sukhothai Bangkok before joining Hilton to spearhead luxury expansion initiatives, including opening Waldorf Astoria Beijing and Conrad Seoul.

Directly before her time at The Vinoy, Vanessa was general manager of the Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills, where she led her team to outperform luxury benchmarks, such as upholding the Forbes 5-Star rating for both the hotel and the spa.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Led the renovation of The Vinoy Resort, enhancing its luxury offerings.

WHAT INSPIRED THIS NOMINATION?

“Vanessa’s leadership has redefined luxury hospitality at The Vinoy Resort.”

Q&A with Vanessa Williams

What advice would you give to your younger self?

Be prepared for career challenges, especially in environments that might not readily accept a strong, determined woman with high expectations. Build resilience, know the landscape you’re entering, and set realistic expectations. Keep learning and growing, staying true to your ambitions despite any obstacles you encounter.

What keeps you inspired?

Throughout my career, I’ve been deeply inspired by witnessing the growth and development of individuals that I have had the honor to lead, across diverse cultures spanning ten countries. Witnessing them grow and thrive, evolving into accomplished leaders and remarkable individuals within the realm of hospitality, has been my driving force. My passion lies in both nurturing these individuals and contributing to the luxury hospitality industry that resonates with me.

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The Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI) is the hospitality industry's leading advocate for intelligent, sustainable hotel revenue growth. HSMAI provides hotel professionals and their partners with tools, insights, and expertise to fuel sales, inspire marketing, and optimize revenue through programs such as HSMAI's Revenue Optimization Conference, Marketing Strategy Conference, Sales Leader Forum, and Adrian Awards. HSMAI offers organizational and individual membership, with more than 7,000 members in four global regions — the Americas, Asia Pacific, Europe, and the Middle East. — [hsm.ai](https://www.hsm.ai)