



Managed Travel & Procurement Solutions Online

INSIDE AUGUST 2007

[Home](#) [Archives](#) [Events](#) [About Us](#) [Media Kit](#) [Subscribe](#)

Cover Story

Association News

Departments

INSIGHT

SPECIAL REPORTS

EDITOR'S NOTES

SPEAKING FREELY

GOING GLOBAL

@ ISSUE

TRAVEL BUYER'S FYI

INDUSTRY NEWS & PEOPLE

Business Travel
EXECUTIVE

"Helping travel
management
create value for
corporations."

— BTE Editorial Mission

Sponsored by



[Contact Us](#) [Privacy](#)

HOTEL PULSE !! July 2007

Room To Grow

Excitement is palpable in the voices of spokespeople from the convention and visitors bureaus in the West and South/Southwest United States.

by Jennifer Jennings

An influx of luxury and boutique hotels is apparent in several cities, including Denver, Dallas/Ft. Worth, and Atlanta. It's often accompanied by downtown revitalization projects, renovation of existing hotels, and construction of new stadiums and convention centers.

The CVBs' citings of dual trends — increased room inventory and new attractions to draw more guests and grow demand further — was statistically defined by a PriceWaterhouseCoopers report in early June. In it, PwC forecasts a 1.6 percent supply growth this year, only slightly exceeding growth in demand. Nevertheless, demand remains high, and the PwC analysts forecast a 5.6 percent RevPAR growth in 2007. Supply growth will actually accelerate a little again in 2008 — by 2.3 percent — says PwC.

Increased demand for hotel space and services isn't just occurring in the transient travel space. A survey of pre-registrants for the 11th annual Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International's (HSMAI) Affordable Meetings West show last month at the San Jose McEnery Convention Center, showed that 65.9 percent are looking for fresh venues for their meetings and events.

Few will be disappointed.

Changing Skylines

The best evidence is in the local markets.

Denver has concentrated billions of dollars on tourism within the last decade. Projects included the construction of five sports stadiums, a new airport and a convention center, which opened in 2005. It's being accompanied by growth in hotel space. Although there had been some luxury hotels in Denver, including the Adams Mark Hotel (which will be acquired this summer by Oxford Lodging Advisory & Investment), the Ritz-Carlton (opening this fall) will be its first 5-Star offering. Four Seasons will follow in 2009. "We really love seeing the luxury market in Denver, it's nice to see a 5 star luxury product here too," says Rich Grant, communications director, Denver Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Four building projects in the Dallas/Fort Worth area have brought several new hotels into the cities, including Mandarin Oriental, W Dallas Victory Hotel and Ritz-Carlton. As noted in the spring 2005 issue of Town & Country Travel, the art scene on the plains of Texas is hot, and the temperature continues to rise. There's the new Nasher Sculpture Center in the Dallas Art District. Around the corner, a new opera house and a theater are under construction; both will be connected to the Ritz-Carlton Hotel by a walkway.

Other projects include the Victory Park development, home of the

Login

User Name

Password

[Forgot your password](#)

Subscribe to BTE Now!

Not a Registered Subscriber Yet? [Learn More](#) or [Subscribe Now!](#)

Back Issues

August 2007

W hotel and the American Airlines Center, a sports venue. The multi-use development includes restaurants, retail space and permanent residences. The Mandarin Oriental, opening in 2009, sits across the street. Revitalization of downtown continues, in addition to the construction of the Trinity River Project, which will give exercise and outdoor enthusiasts increased access to the largest urban hardwood forest in the country.

Fresh & Refreshed

Hotel renovations and constructions are rapidly changing Las Vegas' landscape, too. According to Jeremy Handel, public relations specialist at the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Bureau, the success of Las Vegas just continues to attract new development. Some of the new hotels are being built on the sites of older, torn-down properties; others are being built on new sites. Plans are in the works to renovate the convention center; the expansion of the Sands Expo Convention Center and Venetian Congress has been postponed until 2009.

Significant hotel growth can also be seen in Atlanta, which Mark Vaughan, executive vice president and chief sales and marketing officer for the city's CVB, says has resulted in an "outstanding year." Several boutique hotels are making their appearance in Atlanta, including three W hotels and TWELVE Centennial Park. Atlanta will have the most W hotels in the country, outside New York City. Luxury hotels, such as St. Regis and The Mansion on Peachtree, both opening in 2008, are adding to the upscale inventory. Four Seasons Hotel Atlanta completed renovations in 2006, upgrading rooms and adding a spa and health club. "We have great restaurants, great attractions, great hotels and great activities," says Vaughan. "I think people who haven't been to Atlanta in a while will enjoy what they find."

Boutique and luxury hotels continue to open up in metropolitan areas across the country. Aloft and W Hotel are both opening in Philadelphia. Four Seasons will open in Seattle, and in Boston, the Mandarin Oriental.

There are more than 80 new hotels opening this year under the aegis of Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide; that's almost doubling last year's number. Starwood's global pipeline holds about 420 hotels, including more than 90 examples of its two new brands, aloft and ELEMENT, which are slated to begin coming online next year. Slightly more than half of all the Starwood hotels opening this year are slated for North American markets.

See the accompanying table for more particulars of 10 cities; read on for news from around the country.

Alexandria, Virginia:

Multi-million dollar renovations, scheduled to be completed this fall, will include all-new public areas and significant upgrades to the 185 suites of the Hawthorn Suites hotel on North Van Dorn Street. The hotel's facade will be transformed with a stylish porte-cochere, an elegant new lobby expanded to include a dining area with comfortable lounge seating, 42-inch plasma TVs, and a new breakfast bar. There'll also be a new executive boardroom, a business center equipped with the latest technology, a new fitness room with state-of-the-art equipment, and a convenient mini market. Each of the renovated new studios and one- and two-bedroom suites will be 100 percent smoke free.

Baltimore:

InterContinental Hotels Group is just completing the \$6 million conversion of the Atrium Court Hotel to Crowne Plaza Rockville. The hotel has easy access to all three airports serving the Washington, D.C. area. Renovations include a business service center, upscale room amenities, a 3,700 sq.-ft. terrace, high-speed Internet access, wireless Internet access from

common areas, a 2,000 sq- ft. fitness and health center, and a restaurant and lounge. The hotel will be 100 percent smoke-free. The hotel offers more than 13,000 sq. ft. of flexible meeting space, including a 5,000 sq.-ft Remington Grand Ballroom and six meeting rooms.

Bethesda:

The Bethesda North Marriott Hotel and Conference Center in North Bethesda, Md., has begun an expansion that will double the property's capacity to 450 rooms. The 225 new guest rooms are all contained in a new wing; construction is scheduled for completion in January 2009.

Charleston:

Ground's been broken for the 136-room aloft Charleston Airport & Convention Center, which will be minutes from Charleston International Airport and the city's Convention Center. The hotel is scheduled to be opened in 2008.

Denver:

The Brown Palace Hotel & Spa, which has been open every day since Aug. 12, 1892, has completed an \$8 million renovation of its 241 guestrooms. By yearend, 199 of them will also have new bathrooms. The Brown Palace provides 13,000 square feet of meeting space for groups of 10 to 500; services include a business center, professional audio-visual team, full-service catering, Internet access and video conferencing.

Fort Lauderdale:

The St. Regis Resort & Residences, Fort Lauderdale has opened. The Starwood-managed resort includes a 166-room hotel, 28 private residences and 34 hotel condominiums. The hotel's 24,000 square feet of meeting space includes an oceanfront ballroom.

Houston:

The Omni Houston has broken ground for the construction of a new 10,000 square-foot ballroom and a 6,815 square-foot luxury spa. The new ballroom will increase the hotel's total meeting capacity to 26,000 square feet, which can be divided into seven individual rooms that can be used concurrently, capable of handling more than 1,100 guests for meetings, 1,000 guests for receptions, and more than 800 diners for seated meals. With state-of-the-art wired-in and wireless technology, the ballroom will have the capability of handling the most complex and intricate meetings and conferences. The ballroom will have spectacular views of the Omni's pool area and signature swan pond. Expected completion date is June 2008.

Kansas City:

The InterContinental Kansas City at the Plaza is just beginning a \$15 million restoration of all its guest rooms and public spaces. The transformation will be completed in November and include a remodel of all 366 guest rooms and public spaces, including the Oak Room restaurant, Oak Bar and the lobby.

Miami Beach:

The 1,504-room Fontainebleau Miami Beach is in the midst of a \$1 billion renovation and expansion that is scheduled to be completed in mid-2008. When it's over, the hotel will offer 58 meeting rooms, totaling 107,000 square feet; plus more than 42,000 square feet of pre-function space and 51,000 square feet of outdoor function space. Three ballrooms totaling 66,000 square feet will be able to accommodate as many as 3,000 people. A meeting center, with nearly 19,000 square feet of space and two permanent boardrooms, will have dedicated registration areas and a separate conference entrance for group

arrivals and departures. Accommodations will include nearly 700 studio and one-bedroom suites in the resort's two new luxury towers.

Memphis:

Global Hyatt has already signed a management agreement, with Carlisle Corp., for the new Hyatt Regency Memphis Hotel and Spa at One Beale. The 240-room hotel will be located at the base of a mixed-use tower slated to open in 2010. In addition to the hotel space and approximately 150 condo units, the building will have 29,500 square feet of office space and 500 on-site parking spaces.

New York City:

Hyatt's new Andaz brand is slated to come online at 75 Wall Street, the former downtown headquarters of JPMorgan Chase, in 2008. There will be 250 hotel suites in the lower portion of the building and 350 condos in the upper 24 floors.

Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts will open the 206-room Shangri-La Hotel, New York in 2010. New York's Shangri-La will be part of a new 64-story tower being built on the site of the former YWCA building at 610 Lexington Ave., and adjacent to the landmark Seagram Building. The hotel will have a dedicated entrance on 53rd Street between Park and Lexington avenues. Sixty-six of the 206 guestrooms will be sold as condominium hotel units but operated as part of the hotel and interspersed throughout hotel floors. Another 17 condos, ranging in size from 1,500 to 3,000 square feet, will occupy the top 10 floors of the tower and have dedicated elevators and customized household services as well as access to Shangri-La amenities and services.

InterContinental Hotels Group already has the largest midscale chain presence in the NYC market with more than 4,000 rooms, and is building on that. It plans to open its first Staybridge Suites property in Manhattan during the second quarter of 2009. The 32-story, 310-studio extended-stay hotel will be two blocks from the Jacob Javits Convention Center. Another IHG extended stay brand, Candlewood Suites, opens in late 2008 about two blocks from Times Square. Also in the company's NYC pipeline:

- Holiday Inn Hotel, opening at 121-125 West 26th Street (five blocks from Madison Square Garden) during the fourth quarter of 2007;
- Holiday Inn Hotel, opening at 29-02 39th Avenue (1.5 blocks from the Queensboro Bridge) in Long Island City, Queens, in the fourth quarter, 2008;
- Holiday Inn Express, at 343 West 39th Street, adjacent to the new Candlewood Suites, in fourth quarter 2008;
- another Holiday Inn Express, this one at 505 West 43rd Street (about midway between the Lincoln Tunnel and Times Square), which is anticipated to open in late 2008;
- a Holiday Inn Express at 59 55th Road in Maspeth, Queens, about two miles from Manhattan, due to open in this year's fourth quarter;
- a Holiday Inn Express conversion from a Best Western, at 113-10 Horace Harding Expressway, two miles from LaGuardia Airport in Flushing, Queens.

In addition, InterContinental's new Hotel Indigo boutique brand will open at 127 West 28th Street in Manhattan in the second quarter of 2009.

The Kitano New York, New York's first and only Japanese hotel, has just upgraded its 149 guestrooms, with new linens and bedding, customized work spaces, sound-reducing technologies in the walls and sound-reducing double-pane windows. The hotel

is located in Manhattan's Murray Hill district.

Orlando:

The Grosvenor Resort is undergoing a \$25 million property-wide renovation and remodeling for all 626 guest rooms and suites, the meeting space, the lobby, the restaurants and lounges, the pool area, guest room corridors, and pre-function space. The project is slated for completion by September 2007.

Plano, Texas:

On track to open in December 2007, NYLO Plano will be the first newly built hotel to market in the innovative lodging category of loft accommodations. The 176-room lifestyle hotel will be the inaugural property of NYLO Hotels, featuring high ceilings, exposed-brick-and-concrete walls, oversized windows, custom-designed furnishings and original artwork. Among each room's high-tech amenities: complimentary secured wired and wireless Internet access; large LCD television, and convenient MP3 player hookups linking iPods, computers and television.

Research Triangle:

Construction on the Hotel Indigo Durham, North Carolina (USA) begins this summer, with an anticipated opening date in April 2008. The 125-room, six-floor hotel will be adjacent to the area's prestigious Research Triangle Park and three miles west of Raleigh-Durham International Airport. In keeping with the brand's design concept, Hotel Indigo Durham will reflect the local market while maintaining the signature hallmarks, combining to offer a renewable exterior building mural, interior water feature, open public spaces, a meditation courtyard, an indoor pool, and guestrooms with curved walls and distinctive entry alcoves.

St. Louis:

The first of two Hotel Indigos in the city will open this October, after conversion from the independently-owned Inn at the Park, a 120-room property at the east end of Forest Park, in the city's upscale Central West End. The second development, located in the downtown St. Louis convention district, will be part of a mixed-use development expected to open in spring 2008.

Tampa:

The new Embassy Suites Tampa-Brandon opens this fall at 10220 Palm River Road in Brandon. The hotel has 147 two-room suites, open-air atrium and 3,000 square feet of meeting room space. Amenities include a complimentary cooked to-order breakfast and an evening manager's reception. The hotel is near an array of attractions including Florida State Fairgrounds, University of South Florida, Tampa Convention Center and Busch Gardens. ■

[back to top ▲](#)



© 1997-2003 Business Travel Executive Inc., All Rights Reserved