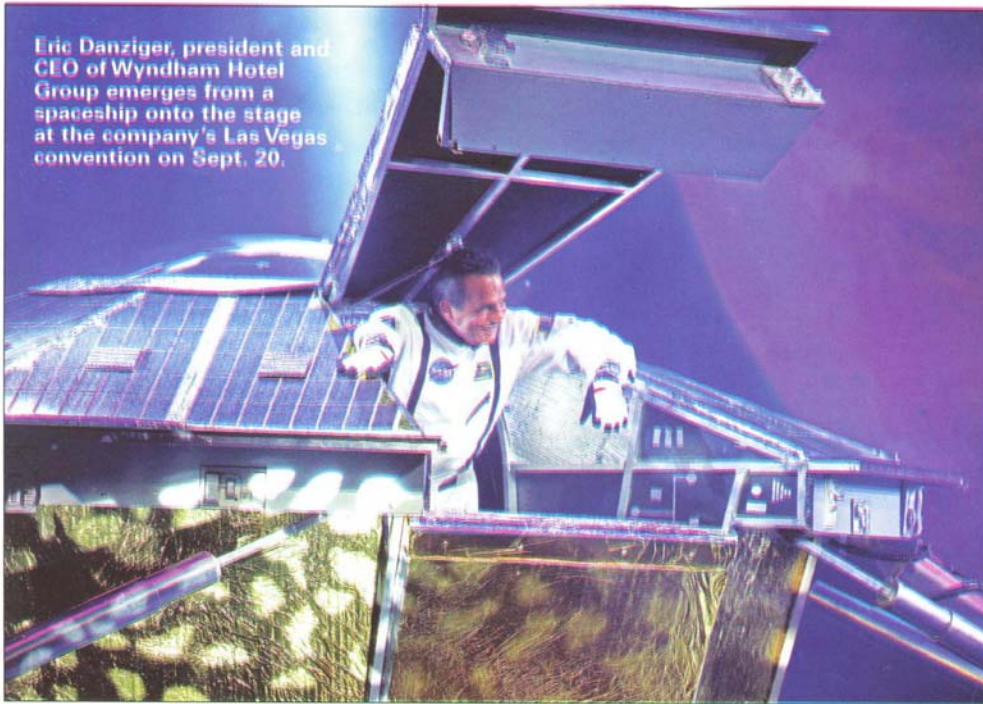


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One small step for mankind, one giant conference for Wyndham Hotel brands



Eric Danziger, president and CEO of Wyndham Hotel Group emerges from a spaceship onto the stage at the company's Las Vegas convention on Sept. 20.

LAS VEGAS, NV—It was a gathering of the brands on a scale that was unprecedented even for the Mandalay Bay Hotel in Las Vegas, as over 5,700 hotel owners, general managers and staff from the dozen brands of Wyndham Hotel Group gathered for its first ever all-brand global conference September 20-23.

And by the end of the conference, there was yet another brand, as Wyndham president and CEO Eric Danziger announced that he had inked a deal with Robert Earl, founder of Planet Hollywood, for a 13th flag (see story page 6).

Wyndham Hotel Group is huge and all-encompassing. Headquartered in Parsippany, NJ,

it has nearly 7,200 hotels and approximately 607,000 rooms in 65 countries around the globe. In 2009, the company sold more than 98 million room nights.

Its brands include the upscale offerings of its namesake Wyndham Hotels and Resorts brand, including Wyndham, Tryp, Wingate by Wyndham and Hawthorn Suites by Wyndham. It also has what it calls its "iconic" brands: Days Inn, Super 8, Howard Johnson, Ramada, Baymont, Microtel, Knights Inn and Travelodge.

Wyndham Hotel Group is one of three business units of Wyndham Worldwide Corporation, one of the world's largest hospitality

companies, providing hotels, timeshare resorts, vacation rentals and timeshare exchange.

Canada is second only to the U.S. in numbers of Wyndham Hotel Group hotels, with 462 properties and 37,258 rooms.

Changing the course of history

The conference presentation began as a spaceship landed on the stage at the Mandalay Bay Convention Centre, and Danziger emerged.

Like astronaut Neil Armstrong, who landed on the moon in 1969, "we are breaking boundaries and changing the course of history" by hosting what may be the largest hospitality gathering of its kind in North America, he said.

On May 25, 1961, president John F. Kennedy said that there would be a man on the moon within the decade. And eight years, one month and 29 days later, it happened.

Danziger compared reaching the moon to WHG's vision. "We are the leading hotel group in terms of size, customer value and performance. We have lofty aspirations. We are what 90 is to achievement and what Elvis is to rock and roll."

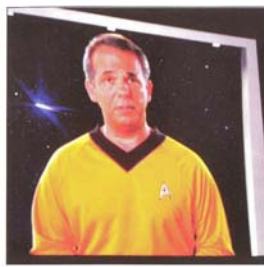
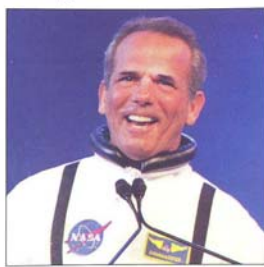
Apollo 18 didn't reach the moon because it was easy.

None of us is without our struggles, he said, noting that Wyndham has had a number of successes despite last year's economic woes.

JD Power surveys are a case in point. Microtel has ranked highest in guest satisfaction among economy/budget hotel chains for the 9th year in a row. Howard Johnson rose by 39 points to take second spot in the economy category. Days Inn and Howard Johnson also performed well.

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Wyndham's Eric Danziger: the many faces of leadership



Eric Danziger, president and CEO of Wyndham Hotels Group as, left to right, Neil Armstrong, *Star Trek's* Captain Kirk, the Wizard of Oz, Captain Jack Sparrow from *Pirates of the Caribbean* and Jake Sully from *Avatar*.

Continued from page 1

"We've had a tough two years, but we never lost focus during the economic tsunami. We recognize the global economy is returning, but it is not out of the woods yet. Recovery will be a slow, gradual process."

He added that the company is growing by adding more brands. These include the 91 Tryp hotels located throughout Europe and South America, and the Planet Hollywood deal.

Great leadership starts with imagination, vision

A two-hour presentation, peppered with historical examples and movie clips, featured Danziger dressed as everyone from Captain Kirk of the *Starship Enterprise* to Jake Sully, hero of *Avatar*.

Things are only impossible until they're not, Danziger said. For years, everyone thought that running a mile in less than four minutes was impossible. When Roger Bannister broke the record, he did what had been deemed impossible. But he only held on to the record for 46 days until someone else ran the mile in under four minutes.

In the same way, people predicted

that taking *Star Trek* from the big screen to the small screen wouldn't work—that the television series wouldn't last a season.

"But *Star Trek* is a great brand that continues to stand the test of time by retaining the iconic nature of the brand," Danziger said. "We have to do the same."

Project Apollo

With all of Danziger's references to astronauts, it's no accident that Wyndham's current drive to redesign its website and align its resources has a space theme too. It's dubbed "The Apollo Mission."

One of the main changes will be in how other Wyndham brands appear on the website. Right now, if someone searches for a certain brand in a certain location, the site will refer them to another Wyndham brand only if there are none of the first choice brands in that location. In the new website scenario, even when there is the sought-after brand in the specific location, the site will also list the other Wyndham brands available in the area, ranked by distance from the desired location.

"Our new brand websites are enhancing the way we do alternative selling," Keith Pierce, Wyndham Hotel

Group president, brand operations, the Americas, said in an interview. "Now we show alternative brands only if there is no availability or no hotel at a location. [In the future], we will show our sister brands after we have exhausted the first brand."

"This ensures that we provide the consumer with all of the options Wyndham Hotels has in that market."

Earth, Wyndham, Fire

The conference ended with a surprise performance by a group dubbed, Earth, Wyndham, Fire, consisting of the 17 members of the Wyndham Hotel Group Executive Committee. Led by Jim Alderman, executive vice president, development, the group sang two songs, *I'm a Believer* by the Monkees, and *Break on Through to the Other Side* by The Doors.

While Alderman is an experienced musician, some of the other members of the team picked up an electric guitar for the first time during the four months of practicing.

Kathleen Chiechi Flores, executive VP, HR told *CLN* it was an intense team-building process that involved many hours of practice. And Keith Pierce remarked ruefully that he'd noticed, "they didn't mike my bongos."

Aspirational address to Days Inn Canada

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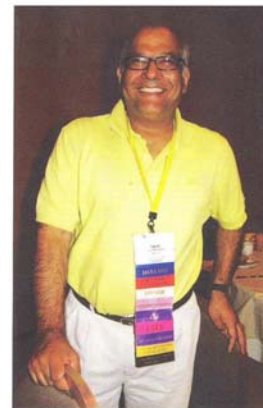
averaged \$109 ADR, 62 per cent occupancy and \$68 RevPAR during the first seven months of 2010.

By contrast, the "B" group of hotels had much lower numbers—\$93 ADR, 52 per cent occupancy and \$48 RevPAR.

"The only thing separating them is what's done at the property level," Prince stated.

He noted that several Canadian hotels ranked highly among the 1,700-strong Days Inn system, including Athabasca, Thunder Bay North, Grande Prairie, Edmonton South and Barrie.

He called on the franchisees to work individually, provincially and regionally on their Medallia [hotel rating] scores, to try and sign up more Wyndham Rewards members. He said that the company was undergoing a complete review of its breakfast program to provide a more intelligent, healthier breakfast offering. And he noted that 3,000 beds in the Canadian system are dressed in Days Inn's new duvets, skirts and sheets.



Winner of the prize for the most ribbons? Shown here is Iqbal Moleedina, GM Days Inn Owen Sound, ON at the convention

The first example was Starbucks, whose secret to selling coffee is customization. Each sale is a four-to-five minute transaction. They have 16,000 stores around the world, and customers are engaged when they walk in. "At the one closest to my office, they ask me if I have been travelling," said Prince. Sometimes they subtly try to upsell him as well.

The second example was Apple. "No one gets innovation like Apple. They have cool technology in great looking packaging. They only opened their first store in 2001, and now there are 300. The kids there are 'Geniuses'—these are stores where adults are allowed to be kids. They are effective in engaging every single customer."

But you don't have to be big to be successful, Prince added giving the example of the single location, single store Pike's Place Fish Co. in Seattle. They have a nine-word mission statement: "Be there, play, make their day, choose your attitude."

"I found guys doing lobster races and throwing fish, even—with permission—at the customers."

"There's no reason we can't be thought of in the same vein as Starbucks, Apple and Pike's Place," Prince told the Days Inn Canada franchisees. "For years, we've been saying we're the best value under the sun. If we take our product and add service and focus on service, we can move our scores through the roof."

MORE WYNDHAM HOTELS COVERAGE ON PAGE 7

A Planet Hollywood hotel in Canada?

LAS VEGAS—It was an announcement that was long on excitement and—not surprisingly—since the ink was barely dry—short on specifics.

The big surprise revelation of the Wyndham Hotel Group conference was that Wyndham had signed a license agreement with Planet Hollywood Resorts International, to franchise the Planet Hollywood Hotels brand and provide management services globally.

The Planet Hollywood brand was founded in 1989 by Robert Earl, formerly president and CEO of Hard Rock Cafés. It capitalizes on the global appeal of movies, sports, celebrity and entertainment-based themes. Planet Hollywood International, Inc. will continue to own Planet Hollywood brand trademarks and intellectual property.

"The addition of an entertainment-based hotel offering will com-



Robert Earl (left), founder of Planet Hollywood, with Eric Danziger president and CEO of Wyndham Hotels Group.

plement Wyndham Hotel Group's strong global portfolio by expanding its appeal to a much wider audience," said Eric Danziger, Wyndham Hotel Group president and chief executive officer.

"Planet Hollywood is a world-renowned brand favored by travellers and developers who crave unique experiences, distinctive dining and outstanding service."

In a media interview following the announcement, Danziger said the properties could be as small as 200 rooms, or as large as the only existing

Planet Hollywood hotel in Las Vegas, which has 4,000 rooms.

Wyndham Hotel Group will offer developers the choice of various levels of entertainment-based concepts for hotel development opportunities based on hotel or resort size and geographic location.

And how about Canada? Will we see a Planet Hollywood hotel here?

While they declined to give any details, staff at the Planet Hollywood booth at the Wyndham tradeshow indicated that there had definitely been some interest among Canadian developers.

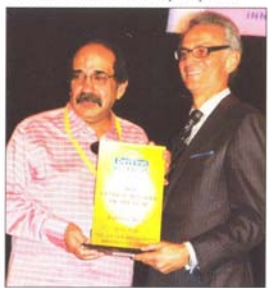
Commenting on the deal, Earl had nothing but praise for Wyndham and its boss.

"Most importantly, I know that our brand is in the best hands with Eric Danziger and Wyndham Hotel Group," he said.

Your interaction with guests and staff crucial

"Each one of us comes into contact with hundreds of business people each day," Prince noted, providing an example of all the people he met on his trip from Toronto to Las Vegas.

The most important aspect of our hospitality business is "how each of us interacts with our guests and each of our staff members." He gave examples of three companies—large, fairly large and single location—that had learned this lesson and prospered.



Ishtiaq Awan (left), GM of Days Inn Vancouver Downtown, with Prince. He was named General Manager of the Year. For a complete list of awards and more photos, go to www.can-lodgingnews.com.