



SUSAN BARRY

QUEEN BEE AT HIVE MARKETING

HOST AT TOP FLOOR

Meet Susan Barry, an enthusiastic and visionary leader in the hospitality industry. With her eyes firmly set on the future, Susan's experience is vast and varied, including hotel investment and operations, B2B marketing and communications, and start-ups ranging from an aviation data company to a spa product line. As the host of the acclaimed "Top Floor" podcast, Susan fuels her (and her audience's) curiosity by engaging with experts and influential figures in the industry with a blend of humor and insight. This diverse background and her willingness to push the boundaries of what's possible in hospitality make Susan a dynamic speaker and moderator.

AT-A-GLANCE

2021 - Present: Host + Elevator Operator, Top Floor

2009 – Present: President + Queen Bee, Hive Marketing

1999 - 2009: Director of Sales & Marketing, Starwood Hotels & Resorts

SIGNATURE TOPICS

Comms for Somms: Communications for Hospitality Professionals

B2B Marketing for Hospitality Companies

Level Up LinkedIn

***Special skill at moderating panels**

CONTACT



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topfloarpodcast.com





SHELLEY MONTREUIL

CEO & CO-FOUNDER

TRIPPL INC.

Shelley Montreuil is the Co-founder and CEO of tripll, with over 20 years of entrepreneurial experience spanning web development, hospitality, and tourism tech. As a certified PMP, she has built and sold a successful six-figure web development company and currently leads innovative technology solutions for destination marketing.

Her journey from touring musician across Eastern Canada to tech entrepreneur brings unique insights into performance and networking. Her signature "Networking Like a Rock Star" methodology combines stage experience with proven business strategies to help entrepreneurs build authentic professional relationships that drive success.

AT-A-GLANCE

- CEO & Co-founder of tripll - tourism technology company
- 20+ year serial entrepreneur in service & hospitality
- Certified PMP - combining technical expertise with strategic vision
- Former touring musician and band manager across Eastern Canada

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Networking Like a Rock Star: Building authentic relationships
- AI for Business Efficiency: Notion, Automation & AI
- From Musician to tech CEO: Transferring performance skills to business & board room

CONTACT

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NICOLE SCHMIDT

CEO - SOURCE

Nicole Schmidt is the visionary founder and CEO of Source, a trusted partner transforming global FF&E, OS&E, and OFCI procurement—helping bold ideas become enduring hospitality and commercial spaces. Under her leadership, Source has become a nationally recognized procurement and technology powerhouse, serving the industry's top ownership groups, operators, brands, and developers. Source is a catalyst—accelerating progress and empowering project teams by simplifying complexity, cultivating collaboration and providing expertise and project intelligence that mitigates risk and increases asset values.

AT-A-GLANCE

2018 - Present: CEO of Source

Business Journal Woman of Vision
recipient

25 years construction and hospitality
professional experience

SIGNATURE TOPICS

Designing and implementing a
Cultural Operating System

Practical AI uses in construction,
hospitality, procurement

How legacy industries can embrace
innovation

CONTACT

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 tothesource.com

 **source**

CHERRYL BRAZIER

PRESIDENT - ANCHOR COLLECTION



Cherryl Brazier began her career in the U.K and was educated at the Leeds Polytechnic School of Hospitality Management. She moved to the U.S. in the late '90s to take on the position of Senior Marketing Executive with the British Tourist Authority in Los Angeles. After holding Global Sales Position with Thistle Hotels, Millennium Hotels and Radisson Hotels, Anchor Collection was launched in 2018 to represent independent boutique hotels, venues and DMC's around the world who want to increase their group, meeting and incentive business from the US market. She is an active member in MPI and SITE and previously served on the Site International board of directors.

AT-A-GLANCE

2018 to date - Present: Founder & President
Anchor Collection

2010 - 2017 - Director Global Sales
Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group

Certified Incentive Specialist
Sustainable Event Professional

SIGNATURE TOPICS

Female Founder
Women in business
B2B Sales & Marketing for the
Meeting & Incentive market
Career progression in the hospitality
industry
Sustainable business
Mentorship

CONTACT



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ALEXIS BOWEN

CO-FOUNDER & CEO | ELSEWHERE

Alexis Bowen is a respected expert in the travel and tourism industry and co-founder of Elsewhere, a travel marketplace connecting travelers with local experts worldwide. She has been featured by top publications such as the New York Times, Vogue, and USA Today, and was chosen as the face of Canva's 'Start-up Success Story' in their prime-time international television campaign.

Drawing on her experience working with major industry players, and as a response to the state of the industry, Alexis co-launched Elsewhere in 2021 to shake up the all-too-traditional tourism space with a digital approach, values-driven mission, and direct-to-local model. The company was acquired by Lonely Planet in 2022.

AT-A-GLANCE

Co-Founder & CEO Elsewhere by Lonely Planet:

UCLA Alum, International Development Studies

Career: SXSW, Geographic Expeditions (GeoEx), Voyageurs du Monde, Evaneos

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Sustainable Travel
- Solo Female Travel, Women in Travel
- Future of Travel
- Building a sustainable business
- Marketplace model
- Brand building and positioning
- M&A
- Startup growth
- Go-to-market Strat

CONTACT



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JACKI BROWN

FOUNDER, JACKI BROWN MARKETING

Jacki Brown is the Founder and CEO of Jacki Brown Marketing, LLC, a consultancy that helps hospitality technology companies navigate growth by identifying and crafting their positioning and messaging, then scaling that across digital channels and into lead-generating marketing campaigns.

With nearly two decades of experience in marketing, Jacki honed her skills working with renowned brands such as Amadeus Hospitality, Demandware (now Salesforce Commerce Cloud), Shark Vacuums, and Nexxus Haircare, where she shaped global marketing strategies that significantly impacted pipeline growth and sales. She lives in Portsmouth, NH with her husband and two young children.

AT-A-GLANCE

- 2024 - Present: Fractional Marketing Leader for Hospitality Technology
 - Clients have included Hapi, shr Group, Reeco, olive, Reeco, Bodhi, Evention
- 2019 - 2023: Head of Marketing Strategy and Product Marketing at Amadeus Hospitality

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- B2B Hospitality Technology Marketing
- Branding, Positioning, and Messaging
- Content Marketing Strategy

CONTACT



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MICHELE ANDERSON

CEO & CO-FOUNDER THIRSTY LOGIC MASTER OF WINE

Michele is an innovative and experienced hospitality and technology business leader. She began her hospitality career as a Sommelier with the Four Seasons Group which paid her way through law school.

She draws on her unique experiences and credentials in wine, technology, and front-of-house service to help venues enhance dining experiences and take full advantage of the high-margin drinks category.

As an experienced public company leader and successful entrepreneur, she effectively reaches both large and small business audiences. She is an engaging public speaker who loves to share learnings and insights by drawing on her experiences and adding a touch of humor.

AT-A-GLANCE

CEO and Co-Founder, Thirsty Logic

Previously ran the \$1B revenue Shutterfly Consumer Business in Silicon Valley

Independent Director of Baron Philippe de Rothschild (a global wine business) and Claranova (a global technology business)

One of 60 Masters of Wine in North America

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- How to drive profitability through drinks
- How to use tech and AI to upskill servers and improve customer experiences
- How affordable technology tools can optimize both buying and selling drinks
- How every restaurant can now afford Sommelier expertise

CONTACT



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SALLY BUNNELL

CEO & FOUNDER, NAVISAVI

Sally Bunnell is a full-time digital nomad with 118 countries stamped on her passport. As she traveled the world, she found that her actual experiences were different from what she saw advertised, inspiring Sally to create NaviSavi, the first short form UGC video platform that bridged the gap between wanderlust, recommendations, actual itinerary planning and booking.

Formerly a Senior Vice President at a Record Label for over 20 years, and with +1 Billion cumulative YouTube views on her directing and producing content, Sally has spent her career creating and marketing short-form video content for Millennials & Gen Z, influential artists, and brands around the world. Sally is one of Phocuswright's "Young Industry Leaders in Travel" and speaks about "Short-Form video" "Traveling The World Solo" and "How to Work from Anywhere."

AT-A-GLANCE

2023: Techstars (Cohort 2023)

2021: NaviSavi platform launches.

2005-2021: Music Entertainment & Video
Creative Production Consultant - Major
Record Labels, Artists & Brands

2005: Production & Development & Host
The Late Show with David Letterman
ABC Sports
Radio Networks/TV Correspondent

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Solo Female Travel
- Video Production & Marketing
- UGC (User Generated Content)
- Short Form Video & Influencers
- Digital Nomadism and Remote Work
- Tech Female Founders

CONTACT

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JUDITH CARTWRIGHT

FOUNDER & MANAGING DIRECTOR, BLACK CORAL CONSULTING

Judith is a hospitality industry veteran with over twenty years of experience. She is the Founder and Managing Director of Black Coral Consultancy.

Judith is known for her innovative and disruptive approach to revenue management, which has helped her achieve outstanding results throughout her career. She is passionate about maximizing profitability and believes that revenue management is a strategic tool for any hospitality company.

Judith's expertise extends to navigating new business ventures, overcoming challenges, and identifying new revenue streams. In her previous roles, she has become a trusted advisor on commercial activities and led high-performing teams to achieve revenue optimization.

AT-A-GLANCE

2021 - present : Black Coral Consulting

2022 - present : Associate Member, ISHC

2021 - present : Chair, Revenue Optimisation Advisory Board, HSMAI ME

2009 - 2021 : Global SVP, Revenue Management and Distribution, Kerzner International (Atlantis Resorts, Mazagan, One&Only, SIRO)

2007 - 2009 : Area Director Revenue Management, Minor Group

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Total Revenue Optimisation
- Asset Management with a Commercial Lens
- Crisis Management
- Distribution
- Audit and Gap Analysis
- Management Company Reviews
- Commercial Strategies
- New Development Advisory

CONTACT



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ASHLEY CHING

FOUNDER & CEO
INHAVEN

Ashley is the Founder and CEO of Inhaven, a professional home furnishings and consumables procurement solution for the vacation rental industry, saving property managers and hosts significant time and money. She has spent her career sourcing products, leading operations and establishing brand standards for Fortune 500 companies. Prior to founding Inhaven, she was the Chief Merchandising Officer at The Company Store, a Home Depot company and head of Global Merchandising Operations at Tiffany & Co. She lives in New York with her husband, 4 young children and dog, Chase.

AT-A-GLANCE

2021 - Present: Founder & CEO, Inhaven

2019-2021: Chief Merchandising Officer, The Company Store, a Home Depot Company

2018-2019: Head of Global Merchandising Operations, Tiffany & Co

Public Speaker at National and International Conferences

SIGNATURE TOPICS

Creating national brand standards for the Vacation Rental Industry

Revolutionizing B2B Commerce

Journey of a Female Founder

Vacation Rental Industry trends

CONTACT

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EMILY DAILEY

FOUNDER & CEO

PENDAILEY CONSULTING

Emily Dailey is a multi-passionate leader who found her home in hospitality in 2007. Coming from a theatre background, she spent years designing sets and telling rich stories before stepping into a hotel. She spent the beginning of her career in operations before putting her creativity to work and transitioning to marketing and branding. She has helped dozens of hotels, restaurants, and other tourism businesses across the country find and tell their own stories. Emily is an enthusiastic and exciting educator, public speaker, and podcast guest, offering engaging content and actionable takeaways curated for each audience. She has achieved her bachelor's in business administration from IRSC and certifications in marketing from HSMAI and USF, and is a sustainability professional with GSTC.

AT-A-GLANCE

Founder & CEO, PenDailey Consulting
Formerly VP of Marketing, First
Hospitality; Director of Marketing &
Brand Activation, Greenwood
Hospitality

Accelerate Women Leaders in Travel
Board Member
HSMAI Member & CHDM

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Crafting Your Company Culture
- Brand Development Beyond the Page
- Reputation & Review Management
- Commercial Strategy
- 360° Marketing for Hotels and F&B
- Personal Brand Development
- Cultivating Workplace Wellness
- Leadership & Team Development

CONTACT

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FEMALE FOUNDERS IN HOSPITALITY



STEPHANIE DANIEL

CO-FOUNDER & CEO | LEGENDS

Stephanie studied Economics at Cambridge University and became passionate about data. After 15 years operating at the highest levels of investment banking as one of the youngest Managing Directors at Deutsche Bank she decided to combine this with her lifelong passion for travel. She is mission driven to power personalization to increase authentic connection with ourselves, each other and the world.

Legends AI powered platform transforms phone data (such as photos, social, calendar), enriches existing data, and unifies actionable consumer insights to help brands personalize while managing privacy.

Legends won Phocuswright Global StartUp of the Year 2023, Hot25 for 2024, SKIFT IDEAS nominee and Amadeus startup to watch.

AT-A-GLANCE

Co-Founder & CEO Legends:

MA Economics Cambridge University and 15 years in investment banking with Deutsche Bank

Phocuswright Global StartUp of the Year

Techstars portfolio company

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Data
- Zero Party Data
- AI in travel
- Personalization
- Startup growth
- Hospitality technology
- Future of Travel
- Digital identity and wallets

CONTACT



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LAN ELLIOTT

PRINCIPAL, ACACIA HOLDINGS

FOUNDER, ATHENA LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Lan Elliott's career spans 25+ years as a hotel real estate & transactions executive, leading deals in the U.S. and abroad. Most recently, Lan rejoined Acacia Holdings, a hotel investment entity she co-founded, which owns interests in urban convention hotels. Prior to Acacia, she spent 10+ years at Host Hotels & Resorts, and had roles at IHG, W Hotels, and KPMG.

Lan is an Interview Host for It's Personal Stories, an IHI Top Hospitality Podcast, and she was named to IHI's 100 Most Inspirational Leaders in Hospitality and Travel. In 2024, Lan launched Athena Leadership Academy, where she teaches Introduction to Hotel Ownership at university hospitality schools. Lan led and launched the Women in Hospitality Leadership Alliance Speaker Directory. Lan is also a speaker and serves on conference and hospitality school advisory boards.

AT-A-GLANCE

2010 - Present: Co-Founder & Principal, Acacia Holdings

2013-2019: Vice President, Transactions & Asset Management, IHG Hotels & Resorts

2006 – 2009: VP, Development, W Hotels Europe Africa Middle East, Starwood

1996-2006: VP, Acquisitions, Host Hotels

SIGNATURE TOPICS

Understanding the Hotel Owner Mindset

Owning Large Urban Convention Hotels

The Next Generation of Hospitality Leaders (University Hospitality Students)

DEI, Unconscious Bias, & 13 Lessons from Taylor Swift, the Businesswoman

Advancing Women in Hospitality Leadership

CONTACT



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ItsPersonalStories.com





ANNA FEINBERG

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, ALŌ INDEX

Driven by a need for a sustainability procurement solution for hotels, travelers, and enterprises, Anna left her previous position as head of the \$90M global travel program at BNY Mellon to start Alō Index, an ESG hotel data hub that puts intelligent, actionable SaaS in the hands of enterprise travel procurement and hotel sales teams.

Formerly responsible for global hotel, airline, ground transportation and travel management company procurement, Anna led strategic relationships with more than 500 contracted hotels and online travel booking suppliers. Anna envisioned and led the design/build of a global end-to-end travel reporting dashboard that tied TMC, corporate card and T&E data into one system, providing live, holistic oversight and duty of care for the global travel team.

AT-A-GLANCE

Co-Founder and CEO, Alō Index

Director, Global Travel Manager, BNY Mellon

Led multi-million dollar capital campaign and built a LEED Platinum Boys & Girls Club

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Enterprise Travel Management
- Sustainable Procurement
- Sustainability as a Service
- Buyer/Supplier Negotiation and Partnership
- B2B Enterprise SaaS Startups
- Travel Data and Technology

CONTACT

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www.aloindex.com





SHEILA FOLK

CEO + FOUNDER, TRAVEL INDUSTRY SOLUTIONS

With over 20 years of experience in technology, product development, and travel supplier management, Sheila has become an expert in customer attraction and retention, as well as in optimizing business processes.

Her career includes a significant leadership role as Assistant Vice President at an international professional association with 250,000 members across 150+ countries, where she focused on standards, certification, education, and research for professionals in internal auditing, risk management, governance, and IT audit. After achieving tremendous success as a multi-million-dollar producing travel advisor, Sheila founded TIS to provide comprehensive legal protection and operations tools to travel professionals.

AT-A-GLANCE

Featured educator and speaker at industry events.

Contributing writer for various travel trade publications.

Winner of the coveted Magellan Award.

First mover technology founder.

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Travel agent training and certification
- Marketing and promotion for travel agencies
- Legal requirements and compliance
- Travel agent resources and tools for maximum efficiency and profitability
- Risk mitigation and fraud prevention

CONTACT



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MARIA GARRIDO

FOUNDER & CEO

TERRANAM WELLNESS

Maria is an accomplished multilingual and multinational executive specializing in inspirational leadership and purpose-driven initiatives. Throughout her global career in Consumer Goods, Media, Tech and Entertainment, she has earned a reputation for leading transformational change with empathy.

She also holds various board and advisory roles, including positions at Carmila, Havas, Live One and Quilt.ai, an artificial intelligence company studying the human experience.

A wellness enthusiast, Maria founded TERRANAM, a luxury retreat in Spain, after 15 years of practice. Passionate about women's empowerment, she supports female-led startups, serves on the International Women's Forum board, and advocates for female survivors of abuse.

Maria holds a Master's in International Business and is based in Paris, France.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Moderator/Interviewer w/celebrities: Halle Berry, Nile Rogers, James Bay, Serena Williams.
- International, Trilingual, Keynote Speaker in Tech (Singapore) Media (Mumbai, LATAM) AI (NY) and Wellness (UK)
- President of Entertainment Jury at CannesLions & Eurobest.
- Featured on CNBC, Bloomberg News, The Guardian Summit, The Economist, Canal+ and multiple podcasts.
- 2024 Billboards International Players

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Trends in Wellness
- Digital Transformation
- Meaningful Brands
- Content Marketing
- Resilience
- Leading with Empathy
- Fandom

CONTACT

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EMILY KANDERS GOLDFISCHER

FOUNDER & EDITOR IN CHEIF
HERTELIER

A curious journalist and storyteller passionate about the hotel industry, Goldfischer founded hertelier in March of 2021. An online media platform that enlightens and inspires women in hospitality to pursue, navigate, and nurture their careers., hertelier has taken off, creating a dynamic and engaged community of professionals.

Emily curates hertelier's content through the lens of supporting women. With deep knowledge on gender related workplace issues and business skill building, Emily can offer insights and inspiring presentations to your team.

A graduate of the Cornell Nolan School of Hotel Administration with a master's from the London School of Economics, Emily is an accomplished communications executive. She has been recognized by the International Hospitality Institute as one of the "100 Most Powerful People in Global Hospitality" for 2023.

AT-A-GLANCE

2021-Present: Founder, Editor in Chief, Hertelier

1999 - Present: London Correspondent, Questex Media, Luxury Travel Advisor

1999 - 2010: VP Communications, Loews Hotels

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Women in hospitality: trends, issues and accomplishments
- Creating More Inclusive Workplaces
- Executive Presence, Networking, Personal Branding and Impactful Communications
- Trends in luxury travel from both the consumer and operations perspective

CONTACT

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LEE GONZALEZ

FOUNDER OF L&L HOSPITALITY

Lee has a decades of experience in the development, opening, and operation of hybrid hostel/hotel properties. Now a seasoned leader, Lee started her career in hospitality back in 2006 when she and her sister left their finance jobs to open hostels together in Barcelona, Spain.

Since then, they converted a 15,000 square foot warehouse in Queens into The Local NY, a 150 bed hostel, cafe and bar. They also did ground up construction and built their newest concept, the 250-bed hostel with restaurant and rooftop bar Lolo Pass, in Portland, Oregon.

Lee graduated from The Wharton School at The University of Pennsylvania in 2003 and received an MBA from INSEAD in 2012. She is on the Steering Committee of the Female Founders in Hospitality Network and she chairs the Young Professional Committee of the James Beard Foundation.

AT-A-GLANCE

2013- Present / New York City - developed, opened, and operate The Local NY

2016 - 2024 / Portland, Oregon - ground-up construction & operation of Lolo Pass, a 250 bed hybrid hostel property with a restaurant, bar, and a cafe

2006-2012 / Barcelona, Spain - opened boutique hostels Somnio and Duo

Previous Experience at Goldman Sachs

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Alternative Accommodations
- Attracting, Retaining, and Developing a Diverse/Gen Z Team
- Debt and Equity Fundraising for Real Estate Hotel Deals
- Hospitable Crisis Management
- Experiential Hotel Design
- Rewriting the Hospitality Playbook

CONTACT



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www.LoloPass.com





CHRISTINA GRACE

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, FOODPRINT GROUP

Christina has spent over 20 years working towards a more sustainable and healthy food system - the last seven tackling food and packaging waste in hospitality.

She is co-founder and CEO at Foodprint Group, a Zero Waste software and training partner to leading hospitality brands including SH Hotels, Rosewood Hotels & Resorts, Sofitel and Four Seasons. She is a an expert on the triple bottom line benefits of Zero Waste place design, people practices and purchasing. She is also a a passionate advocate for sustainable food and agriculture policies and business practices.

Christina is co-author of the NYC [Zero Waste Design Guidelines](#), a Brooklyn-based mom, and trained cook. Early in her career she led marketing for a Thomson Reuters subsidiary and a software advisory firm (now Gartner Group).

AT-A-GLANCE

Co-Founder and CEO, Foodprint Group

20-years of experience in sustainable food and hospitality. Zero Waste expert.

Working with leading brands and managers including SH Hotels (Starwood Hotels), Rosewood Hotels and Resorts, Sofitel, and Aparium.

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Zero Waste Design
- Food Waste - the #1 Climate Opportunity
- Carbon Impacts of Waste / ESG
- Sustainable Purchasing
- The Plastics Pandemic
- Turning Waste into Profits
- Local & Global Policies Driving Change
- TRUE Zero Waste Certification
- Community Engagement Opportunities

CONTACT



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JESSICA GIDARI

FOUNDER & CREATIVE DIRECTOR, PORCELAIN COLLECTIVE

Jessica Gidari brings nearly two decades of experience at the intersection of hospitality design, brand development, and operations. Her career includes leadership roles at renowned firms such as Rockwell Group, LDV Hospitality, and Union Square Hospitality Group - where her time working alongside Danny Meyer instilled a deep understanding of Enlightened Hospitality and the power of creating places that make people feel truly seen.

Now as founder of Porcelain Collective, Jessica helps bring hospitality concepts to life through a high-touch, human-centered approach. She's been featured on Defining Hospitality and Hospitality Daily, and is a passionate voice on building experiences that connect, inspire, and endure.

Porcelain is based in both NYC and Miami, with a multi-disciplinary team driving design, branding, culinary, and operations development for hospitality projects across the country.



AT-A-GLANCE

- Founder & Creative Director, Porcelain Collective
- Nearly 20 years of experience in hospitality design, brand development, and operations.
- Held senior roles shaping hospitality experiences at Rockwell Group, USHG, and LDV Hospitality.
- Featured guest on industry podcasts Defining Hospitality & Hospitality Daily, sharing insights on hospitality design and the evolving guest journey.

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Designing with Intention: Creating Spaces That Feel as Good as They Look
- From Concept to Opening: Building Hospitality Brands That Last
- F&B as a Brand Differentiator in Hotel Development
- Creative Collaboration: How to Build Strong, Integrated Project Teams

CONTACT



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MEGAN GRANT

FOUNDER & CHIEF MEMORY CREATOR FOR CHERISH TOURS

Meet Megan, the Founder & Chief Memory Creator for Cherish Tours. With a background in conference planning and a global canvas of world travel experiences, she has become deeply convinced that travel has the power to be transformational, especially for women striving to create a difference in the world. As a dedicated advocate for empowering women globally, Megan's influence extends well beyond her travels to 40 countries, including over 10 solo adventures. Her unique perspective and innovative approach have set her apart, making significant contributions to discussions on sustainable tourism, global women's businesses, the post-pandemic travel surge, women's travel experiences, and travel safety. Megan's experience adds a layer of expertise and vision, making her a compelling voice in the realm of travel and woman empowerment.

AT-A-GLANCE

2021-Present - Thought Leader, Innovator, and Sustainable Tourism Founder for Cherish Tours

2021 – Founded & Launched Cherish Tours

2018- 2020 - Event Manager and Housing Manager for City-Wide Conferences

SIGNATURE TOPICS

Sustainable Tourism

Women's Empowerment, Economic Freedoms, and Economic Powers Globally

Supporting Women through Travel

Launching a Boutique Tour Operator Company

CONTACT



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SUSAN GRAVES

CEO EXPERIENCE ALIVE, LLC



Susan's 25+ career with Marriott and passion for modernizing the hospitality industry has enabled her to find solutions that are easy to implement, reduce expenses, increase revenue and make for better guest and employee experiences.

Susan has been a guest on podcasts focused on the hospitality industry sharing solutions to support the advancement of the industry in areas such as sustainability, labor support, AI/ML, training and development of employees, security, robotics and more.

Susan has been a speaker for hospitality industry events helping shape the future of the industry.

She has served as board member for the Ohio Hotel and Lodging Association and founded the first ever innovation and technology committee.

AT-A-GLANCE

CEO and Founder of Experience Alive, LLC finding affordable technology solutions for the hospitality industry helping improve profits for owners and operators while enhancing the guest experience.

Founded Innovation and Technology committee as board member for Ohio Hotel & Lodging Association

Experienced speaker: Inspiring women in hospitality podcast, Technology adoption within hospitality speaker, Journalism of Hospitality & Tourism research contributing author- Generative Artificial Intelligence in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry: Developing a Framework for Future Research, Sustainable hospitality podcast, featured in Hospitality Upgrade.com magazine- Women in hospitality stories of inspiration and success.

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Innovation and Technology
- Hospitality trends
- Increasing the value of hotel/resort assets
- Sustainability in hospitality and tourism
- Robotics, AI/ML, RFID solutions
- Training and development
- Hotel openings and operations
- Revenue maximization
- Workflow optimization

CONTACT



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VANESSA KAREL

CEO & FOUNDER OF GREETHER YOUR GO-TO FOR FEMALE TRAVEL INDUSTRY & WOMEN IN TECH

Vanessa Karel is the founder of [Greether](#), an award-winning travel startup that connects female travelers with local female greeters, ensuring safe, empowering, and enriching travel experiences. Under her leadership, Greether has been named one of the 25 hottest travel startups of 2024 by Phocuswright, Travel Startup of the Year in 2024 at WTM and recognized as one of the three most innovative female empowerment travel startups by the UNWTO. Vanessa has secured backing from Andreessen Horowitz through TxO and built partnerships with industry giants like Expedia. She has also been featured in major outlets like Fast Company, Skift, USA Today, Inc. Magazine, CBS News, and even SNL with viral moments that have elevated Greether's visibility and impact worldwide. She is ALSO recognized as one of the top Latina leaders in 2024 and was voted the most impactful entrepreneur creating social impact in Mexico by ASEM.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Vanessa is a published writer and public speaker advocating for women's rights, assault prevention, and sustainable tourism.

Past Leadership Roles:

- Former Managing Director, Girls in Tech San Francisco.
- Co-Founder of Collective Theory

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Entrepreneurship
- Women in Tech
- Marketplaces B2C
- Female Travel Industry
- Female founder challenges
- Go to Market Strategies
- Press Strategies
- Marketplaces
- Sustainable Tourism
- Women's Rights
- Bilingual Spanish

CONTACT



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JESS HAYES

SENIOR SALES DIRECTOR AT ROOMNET PRESIDENT OF HAYESPITALITY

Meet Jess Hayes, with over 25 years of hospitality technology experience. She started her career right out of college, training hotels across the world on how to use their sales software. She is currently working for ROOMNET to transform the way guests watch TV while traveling.

An enthusiastic advocate for hoteliers as they navigate the world of hospitality tech, Jess has a breadth of experience in software sales, marketing and customer success.

As the Immediate Past President of HSMAI Boston, she is an enthusiastic speaker and panel moderator.

AT-A-GLANCE

2023 - Present: Sales Director, ROOMNET

2020-2022 - President of HSMAI Boston

2017- Present: Founded Hayespitality

1996 - 2000: Trainer and Team Leader for Delphi/Newmarket (now Amadeus)

SIGNATURE TOPICS

Hospitality Technology: Sales & Catering, Guest Services, Apple TV

Women in Hospitality

Panel Facilitation

Leadership

CONTACT



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ALI HOYT CO-FOUNDER, LARKSPUR HOSPITALITY CONSULTING

Ali was Senior Director of Consulting at STR for nearly 11 years. She led a consulting team that provided consulting services across a large, global, and diverse client base. Using STR's proprietary database of hotel performance data, the consulting team worked directly with clients to deliver customized solutions that empowered clients to make informed decisions and implement effective strategies. Ali was a frequent speaker at industry conferences and meetings.

Ali is a member of the International Society of Hospitality Consultants (ISHC). In 2016, Ali was awarded the Lori Raleigh Award for Emerging Excellence in Hospitality Consulting from ISHC. Ali earned her bachelor's degree from Cornell University's School of Hotel Administration.

AT-A-GLANCE

Co-Founded Larkspur Hospitality Consulting to help clients harness travel data to drive business decisions and coaching on communication and storycrafting

Previous role as Senior Director of Consulting at STR for 11 years

Member of the International Society of Hospitality Consultants (ISHC)

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Hotel Industry Trends
- Communication Coaching
- Presentation Design
- Data Analytics Techniques

CONTACT

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 <https://larkspurhc.com/>





CYNTHIA HUANG

CEO | DTRAVEL

Cynthia Huang is the co-founder and CEO of Dtravel, a web3 powered vacation rental ecosystem. She's an experienced startup founder and co-founded Altcoin Fantasy, a crypto trading simulation game with 350K+ users worldwide and Airhosts Forum, the largest Airbnb host forum globally.

She won the Plug and Play Batch 14 Travel Startup Award and was also nominated for a Rising Star Award for the 2022 Shortyz Awards. She regularly speaks at conferences and events on web3, DAOs and travel and her articles have been published on sites such as CoinMarketCap, The Startup, and Hacker Noon.

AT-A-GLANCE

CEO at Dtravel, a web3 powered vacation rental ecosystem

CEO of Altcoin Fantasy, a crypto trading simulation game

Co-founder Airhosts Forum, the largest global Airbnb host forum

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Vacation rentals
- AI in travel
- Web3 / crypto / DAOs
- Startup growth
- Personal branding
- Content strategy
- PR

CONTACT

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SHIR IBGUI

FOUNDER & CEO | GLOBE THRIVERS

Shir Ibgui is a trailblazing entrepreneur in the tech industry, recognized as the Founder & CEO of Globe Thrivers, an AI-powered community platform simplifying trip planning for Millennial & Gen Z travelers.

As a first-generation American and college student, Shir seamlessly integrates her multicultural background with her passion for technology and travel. Her expertise spans pioneering innovation, strategic leadership, and business development strategies, propelling growth initiatives.

Shir's approach led her into Israel's dynamic tech scene, where she spearheaded business development and sales at AI startups, contributing to revenue streams totaling millions and fostering the growth of seed companies into unicorns. She participated in the XRC Ventures accelerator and is a featured speaker on podcasts and events focusing on AI & travel-tech.

AT-A-GLANCE

Founder & CEO of Globe Thrivers

University of Florida Double Gator in International Business & MBA Exchange Program at Tel Aviv University

Speaker for the AI Travel Summit and Podcast Co-Host for No Sugar, Just Spice

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Women in Entrepreneurship
- Artificial Intelligence
- Creator Economy
- Community Building
- NexGen Travelers
- B2B Partnerships
- Zillennial/Gen-Z in the Workforce

CONTACT



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AMY INFANTE

FOUNDER & CEO | GITGO GROUP

Meet Amy Infante, the CEO and Founder of GitGo, a commercial strategy consulting firm that designs, implements and optimizes scaleable hospitality B2B programs enabling partners to grow and scale their business.

As an advisor to the the executives and C-suite of major hotel chains, brands, management companies and property level leaders, Amy shares a unique entrepreneurial and very practical perspective that meets her partners where they are today and guides them to their overall growth objectives.

Amy sees first-hand the undeniable impact of using reliable processes, AI enablement and automation coupled with a growth mindset. This winning combination provides sustainable revenue success and a ton of valuable insights to her & GitGo's hospitality partners. With every interaction, Amy focuses on illuminating possibilities and inspiring others toward action!

AT-A-GLANCE

2019 - Present HSMAI Sales Advisory Board Member & Co-Chair of the 1st ever cross-discipline "Commercial Strategy Work Group"

Contributing author for HSMAI's sales training guide [leadership chapter]

Contributing author in the book "Steps To Win in the Meetings Market"

2024 AHLA Hospitality Show Expert Speaker on AI for Sales [19 City Roadshow]

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Optimizing Artificial Intelligence, digital automation & processes for Sales & Marketing
- Winning Mindset for Sales Teams
- Small & Mid-size B2B Programs for Hospitality
- Bridging the Gap Between Hotel Owners & Commercial Teams

CONTACT



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TRICA JEAN-BAPTISTE

FOUNDER,
MORGENSEER HOSPITALITY INC.

Trica Jean-Baptiste is a distinguished former hospitality professional. She began her career leading public relations for renowned hotel brands including Le Parker Meridien Hotel, Doral Hotels & Resorts, and Days Inns of America. Subsequently, she founded Trica Jean-Baptiste Communications, Inc., an award-winning international boutique PR firm, which for fourteen years represented iconic brands and tourism bureaus such as Rocco Forte Hotels, Rosewood Hotels & Resorts, Dubai Tourism Unit. In 2010, Trica transition to commercial real estate, and established Morgensheer Hospitality Inc., a Consortium of Financial, Hospitality and Real Estate consultants. The company provides real estate advisory and capital sourcing to investors, developers, Family Offices, Hotel Brands, and Funds. She is the author of OPERATION RESET: A GUIDE TO REINVENT YOUR CAREER IN ANY ECONOMY

AT-A-GLANCE

2013 - Present / Morgensheer Hospitality Inc.
- real estate advisory - specializing in multi-family, hotel/residences, senior living
2017 - Author/OPERATION RESET

1999 - 2013/Trica Jean-Baptiste Comm., Inc. - award-winning international boutique PR firm
1997 - 1999/Manager Corp Comm - Days Inns of America - overseeing comm for 1200 properties in North America and Africa
1994 - 1997/Dir PR, Le Parker Meridien NY

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Real Estate Advisory - Hospitality
- Sourcing capital partners/investors for Hospitality (ground-up development) projects
- Identifying Hospitality Brand Operators for development/existing assets
- Providing Off-Market Real Estate investment opportunities to investors and developers - iHotel Assets, Land and Senior Living assets

CONTACT



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<https://www.morgensheerhospitality.com>





NINA KLEAVELAND

**CEO & FOUNDER, LANYARD
FOUNDER, FEMALE FOUNDERS IN HOSPITALITY**

Nina is the founder of Lanyard, a platform for affordable corporate housing. Nina is a well-respected hospitality veteran. Prior to founding Lanyard, Nina worked in marketing, loyalty and partnerships roles at Wyndham Hotels & Resorts and Starwood Hotels & Resorts. She most recently led corporate strategy for Wyndham. Nina earned an MBA from The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and a B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania.

Nina is also the founder of Female Founders in Hospitality, a community of inspiring women building companies that will forever change the industry landscape. Nina has been honored as one of the Top Women in Travel and Hospitality in 2023 by Women Leading Travel & Hospitality, as one of the 100 Most Inspirational People in Global Hospitality & Travel by the International Hospitality Institute and as one of the 2024 Most Influential Women in Travel by TravelPulse.

AT-A-GLANCE

2020-Present: Lanyard

2015-2020: Corporate Strategy at Wyndham Hotels & Resorts

2011-2015: American Express

2009-2011: The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania MBA

2005-2009: Marketing at Starwood Hotels & Resorts

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Corporate housing
- Labor shortages
- Mentorship
- Sponsorship
- Women in Entrepreneurship
- Grit
- Founder + parent dynamics

CONTACT



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STEPHANIE LEGER

FOUNDER & CHIEF EXCELLENCE OFFICER FIRST RATE HOSPITALITY

Award-winning Hospitality Excellence Advisor | Trainer | Auditor | Creator | Podcaster | Miami & Global Industry Insider

Stephanie brings over two decades of global hotel industry experience. A trailblazer in the hospitality field, she has trained over 20,000 hospitality professionals worldwide and conducted comprehensive operational evaluations that have become the benchmark for excellence.

She founded First Rate Hospitality in 2017 and also advises hospitality operations on enhancing the guest and employee experience so that businesses can generate higher revenue. Stephanie is transforming companies to be more strategic, productive, and profitable.

AT-A-GLANCE

Recipient 2023 HSMAI Top 25 Extraordinary Minds

Featured in March 2023 Business Insider Publication

Podcast Co-Host “WTF! Walk The Floors- All things Hospitality Training”

Previous Experience at Ritz-Carlton & Forbes Travel Guide

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Hospitality Service
- Hotel Openings
- Hotel Operations
- Hospitality Technology
- Safety Protocol
- Employee Engagement
- Evaluating Luxury Customer Service
- Elevating Service Excellence

CONTACT

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www.wtfwalkthefloors.com





JENNIFER LOH

CEO & CO-FOUNDER, TRAVARAS

Jennifer has spent the last 15 years in travel, starting in hotel operations with Hyatt Hotels before transitioning into Travel Tech as Sales Lead at PeekPro and opening manager for GetYourGuide Americas, a Berlin-based online travel marketplace for tours and activities. After many years in travel, Jennifer decided to go back to school to get her Executive MBA from UC Berkeley, Haas School of Business, graduating in June 2023. During her time at Haas, Jennifer focused on sustainability strategy and innovative business models. Upon graduation, Jennifer left GetYourGuide to start her own venture, TRAVARAS, a regenerative travel platform, paving the way forward for a new way of travel.

Jennifer is a member of the Climate Reality Leadership Corp, and was recognized as 100 Women of Influence in Silicon Valley by the Silicon Valley Business Journal in June 2024.

AT-A-GLANCE

CEO & Co-Founder of TRAVARAS, a regenerative travel platform making it easier for travelers to find and book travel that is good for people and planet.

Leader in sustainable tourism and innovation in the travel tech space.

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Sustainable Tourism
- Innovation
- Planetcentric Design
- Sales & Marketing

CONTACT



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<https://www.travaras.com>



TRAVARAS



REBECCA LOMBARDO

FRACTIONAL CMO HOST OF VENDORVIBES

Fractional Chief Marketing Officer, Rebecca Lombardo, draws from her 25 years of diverse experiences to offer thoughtful insights into the hospitality industry. She frequently speaks at Information Management Network conferences, moderates the Content Marketing World Summit panels, and hosts the YouTube show "VendorVibes," where she interviews hospitality industry professionals. As one of NBC's first "backpack" journalists, and later a travel writer for HuffingtonPost, Rebecca parlayed her bold and creative storytelling into a career as a sought-after branding and marketing expert. She is also an award-winning writer and author with the ability to speak truth through humor and engage audiences of entrepreneurs, franchise owners and small businesses.

AT-A-GLANCE

2021 - Present: Fractional Chief Marketing Officer

2022 – Co-Founder, The 100 Collection

1998 - 2006: Reporter, Editor

2006-2021: Digital Marketing Consultant

SIGNATURE TOPICS

Brand Equity For The Win

The Golden Triangle of Marketing

Why Telling Your Story Matters

Special skill at interviewing high profile guests and speakers

CONTACT



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youtube.com/@VendorVibes/podcasts





MELISSA MAHER

CEO AND FOUNDER OF PINNACLE ENTERPRISES GROUP

Melissa is the founder of Pinnacle Enterprises Group, an executive coaching and consulting firm that works with high-level individual and leadership teams to strengthen their performance. Clients appreciate her honesty, forward-thinking approach, and guidance in achieving, and often surpassing professional goals.

Melissa specializes in leadership coaching, guiding individuals on their path to promotion, aiding leaders in transitioning to new roles, and honing critical skills such as executive presence, emotional intelligence, confidence-building, and the art of influencing and negotiating.

Melissa is a dynamic and passionate speaker, conducts leadership workshops, and excels in moderating.

AT-A-GLANCE

- 2022 – Present: Founder and CEO, Pinnacle Enterprises Group
- 2020-2022: CMO & SVP Marketing and Industry Engagement, Expedia
- 2018-2020: SVP, Marketing and Innovation and Chief Inclusion Officer, Expedia
- 2012-2018: SVP, Global Partner Group, Expedia

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Leading Tough Negotiations
- Building High Performing Teams
- Lean In with Vulnerability and Get Results
- Why Building Your You-nique Personal Brand Matters
- Why Embedding Diversity and Inclusion Into Your Org is Foundational

CONTACT



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PinnacleEnterprisesGroup.com





MEREDITH MARIN

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CO-FOUNDER OF VEGAN HOSPITALITY

Meredith Marin is the Co-Founder and Executive Director of Vegan Hospitality, a global non-profit helping restaurants, hotels and event venues confidently serve their vegan and plant-forward guests. A trailblazer in hospitality and tourism, she has trained hospitality professionals in over 30 countries, from boutique hotels to global brands like Marriott, Hilton, and Hyatt to develop sustainable menu strategies and confidently attract and serve vegan and eco-conscious customers. With a background in social work and behavioral psychology, Meredith specializes in scalable solutions that reduce food-related emissions while enhancing guest experience. An engaging speaker on sustainable tourism, plant-based menu innovation, and shifting industry norms, she inspires hospitality leaders to embrace values-driven change for a more inclusive and sustainable future.

AT-A-GLANCE

- 2025 – Present: Co-Founder & Executive Director of Vegan Hospitality (transitioned to non-profit in 2025)
- 2020-2025: Founder & CEO of Vegan Hospitality
- 2017-2020: Hotel & Restaurant Consultant, University Lecturer
- 2011-2017: Food Systems Social Worker, Community Wellness Coordinator

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Food, Climate, & the Future of Travel
- The Rise of the Vegan Traveler
- How to Engineer Profitable, Plant-Forward Menus
- Mapping the Vegan Guest Journey at Your Hotel
- Lessons from Disrupting an Industry
- Fearless Leadership: Taking Risks to Drive Change

CONTACT



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MARY MATTSON-QUAGLIANA

CO-FOUNDER, KYANITE & CO.

Mary's first job out of college was at the legendary Carlyle Hotel in New York City. When that is your starting point in your career...where do you go from there? She was promoted to lead the Learning & Development vertical for Rosewood Hotels & Resorts. Traveling the world, Mary embraced and immersed herself into each culture to bring learning to life in the respective environment. With Mary, training is never a session, it is an event. She lives the Kyanite & Co. philosophy daily, "to be the best, is to be your best". In 2022, Mary and co-founder Marcie Lieberman, recognized that luxury hotels were blending together and not living their brand differentiators as intended. They created Curated Critique, the modern measurement of hospitality.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Passion for people
- Love of luxury
- Zest for travel
- Culture ambassador
- Global leader
- Certified Executive Coach

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Luxury Lens
- Brand Measurement
- Behavioral-based training
- Executive Leadership & Coaching
- Opening, acquisition, and operating properties from an L&D perspective

CONTACT



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www.kyaniteandco.com





YAMINAH MAYTA CO-FOUNDER, OLIVE

Yaminah is the co-Founder of olive, an AI-powered personalization engine that helps hotels transform their existing website into a powerful, shoppable, ecommerce machine. The olive personalization engine utilizes cutting-edge technology and AI to build predictive models that dynamically optimize the booking experience for real-time conversion. After transitioning to a role in the hotel industry, Yaminah quickly recognized a significant gap in the focus on the guest booking experience. With her extensive background in e-commerce and expertise in building direct-to-consumer channels, she founded olive to help hotels bridge the gap from guest discovery to booking. Born and raised in Honduras, Yaminah has always had a passion for travel and hotels. This love deeply influences her work at olive, driving her commitment to help hotels take back control of their distribution and turn their website visitors into guests.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Present: Co-founder and Product lead at olive, the AI-Powered Booking Engine
- 2019 - 2022: VP of Marketing at Found Places (Hotels, Study, and Residences)
- 2015 - 2019: VP of Growth Marketing at Melie Bianco Accessories

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Direct Booking
- Hotel Websites
- Actionable Ways Hotels Can Use AI
- The Future of Booking Engines

CONTACT

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GRACE MCBRIDE

FOUNDER & CEO | LUCIA

Grace McBride is a visionary entrepreneur in the hospitality industry, renowned as the Founder & CEO of Lucia, a groundbreaking marketplace connecting businesses with freelancers to tackle labor shortages.

With a penchant for out-of-the-box thinking, Grace led TripKit as CEO and served as COO at MilesAhead. Her expertise lies in pioneering innovation, strategic leadership, and transformative solutions.

Grace's unconventional approach has earned her accolades such as Entrepreneur in Residence at Cornell's School of Hotel Administration and winning the Philip C. Wolf Scholarship at Phocuswright. She is also a Techstars Founder Catalyst and Plug & Play Hospitality Accelerator participant, and a sought-after guest lecturer at Cornell U. and the U. of Notre Dame.

AT-A-GLANCE

Founder & CEO of Lucia

Cornell University & University of Notre Dame MBA graduate

Speaker for Independent Lodging Congress (ILC), Forbes Travel Summit, Virtuoso, BLLA, Cornell, and Notre Dame.

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Future of Work
- Luxury Hospitality
- Women in Entrepreneurship
- Luxury Marketing & Branding
- Gig Economy Workforce
- Labor Shortages
- Gen-Z in the Workforce

CONTACT

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FEMALE FOUNDERS IN HOSPITALITY



BLAIRE MCCOY

CO-FOUNDER AND CHIEF REVENUE OFFICER, SUITENESS AND TRAVERSE

Introducing Blaire McCoy, the Co-Founder & Chief Revenue Officer at Suiteness and Traverse. With over two decades of experience in sales & marketing within the hospitality industry, Blaire brings invaluable insights into the challenges faced by professionals in this sector. Her firsthand understanding led her to join Suiteness and spearhead the creation of Traverse. Blaire and her dedicated team are on a mission to revolutionize hotel technology, aiming to enhance hotel profitability and break away from outdated systems. Beyond her executive role, Blaire's global travels have connected her with esteemed partners, prestigious boards, and speaking engagements worldwide. Her distinct perspective and innovative strategies have distinguished her in discussions concerning sales & marketing growth, revenue optimization, hospitality tech, and leadership.

AT-A-GLANCE

- September, 2023; Speaker, Berkeley Skydeck
- 2022-Present - Co-Founder and CRO, Suiteness & Traverse
- 2018 - 2022 - Board Member Expedia Media Solutions
- 2015 - 2022 - Ex.Dir. Sales & Marketing, The Venetian Resort (Forbes 500)

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Hospitality Technology
- The Power of Negotiation
- Revenue Optimization
- Creating a win-win-win
- Women in Leadership
- Sales & Marketing in Hospitality
- Distribution

CONTACT



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<https://traverse.software>



LEAH MURPHY

FOUNDER & CEO | JANE HOTEL GROUP

Leah Murphy is a hotel investor and former valuation executive reimagining what thoughtful ownership looks like. As Founder and CEO of Jane Hotel Group, she brings 14+ years of experience in hotel valuation and advisory, having led national practice groups and advised on \$16B+ in assets.

Her work blends strategy, design, and operational insight, rooted in the idea that hospitality creates lasting value when it's both operationally sound and emotionally resonant. Leah founded the Milwaukee chapter of The Real Estate InvestHER, leads the FFiH Real Estate Mastermind, and spoke at ALIS 2025 on "AI & Hotel Investing." She also captains her women's hockey team—a reminder that grit, collaboration, and showing up matter everywhere.



AT-A-GLANCE

- Strategic thinker at the intersection of capital, care, and design
- Deep expertise in hotel feasibility, underwriting, and positioning
- Grounded in operations, but fluent in ownership and development
- Advocates for emotionally intelligent leadership and inclusive ownership
- Featured panelist at ALIS 2025: "AI & Hotel Investing"

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Hotel Valuation from the Inside Out
- Redefining Hospitality: Presence Over Performance
- Women Rewriting the Real Estate Playbook
- What AI Can't Replace in Hotel Investing
- What the Spreadsheet Didn't Show: Lessons from a Valuation Exec Turned Owner

CONTACT



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DOMINIQUE OLOWOLAFE

CEO & FOUNDER LIGHTLY

Introducing Dominique Olowolafe, the CEO & Founder of Lightly. A former professional athlete turned Hollywood costume designer and supervisor for major television and commercial productions, now emerged as a dynamic thought leader and innovator in the realm of luxury baby care. As an avid traveler and mother of two, she recognized a crucial gap in the market during a pivotal moment at the airport when she found herself without basic baby essentials. Lightly was born out of necessity and a commitment to simplifying the lives of busy parents with a dedication to quality and sophisticated convenience. Dominique's outside-the-box mindset and passion for innovation have positioned Lightly as a trailblazer in the travel and hospitality industry.

AT-A-GLANCE

March 2024 Cast:

‘Side Hustlers’ - Roku’s original competition series in partnership with Hello Sunshine Productions

February 2022 Speaker:

Forbes Travel Guide The Summit - Innovation Panelist

June 2022 Speaker: eTourism Summit & IPW Focus - Bright & Shiny New Object Series

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Enhancing Guest Experiences
- Crafting Brand Standards
- Family Programming
- Luxury Baby Care
- Women in Leadership
- Next Gen Travelers
- Authentic Marketing & Communication Strategies

CONTACT



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<https://lightly.travel>





JOSEPHINE PIPLITS

CEO & FOUNDER, ACT BY CHOICE

Josephine's career has been marked by a deep commitment to sustainable travel.

With over 25 years in the global travel and tourism industry, she founded TripDoodler and Act by Choice to bridge the gap between wanderlust and sustainability responsibility.

Her experience extends beyond traditional travel roles, encompassing positions as a professional board member and a tech entrepreneur. This unique blend of industry expertise, technology, and sustainability knowledge positions her as a notable figure in the field.

Josephine is also recognized as a knowledgeable speaker and panelist, particularly on sustainability in global travel and tourism.

AT-A-GLANCE

Founded Act by Choice to help tourism businesses easily communicate their sustainability actions and turn them into valuable business opportunities.

Experienced Keynote speaker and Panelist

GSTC Professional Certification in Sustainable Tourism

CSRD & ESG Reporting certified, LFCA

Board Member Unitas Rejser (Denmark)

Former founder of Impact Travel Alliance Denmark Chapter.

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Behavior design for sustainable change
- Sustainability communication in practice
- Sustainability in Tourism (Trends, Urgency, Consumer perspective, etc.)
- Green Certifications - Why & how
- Female entrepreneurship
- Leadership & Change Management
- Backpacking with kids

CONTACT



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Act by Choice
Sustainably



ISABEL PORZECANSKI

EOS IMPLEMENTER

PRESIDENT AT PEOPLE TRACTION

Isabel Porzecanski is a highly experienced professional with a career spanning over 25 years in Operations and Human Resources within the luxury hospitality industry.

With a deep understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities of this sector, she has honed the skills for attracting, retaining, and developing top talent.

Passionate and deeply curious, Isabel holds a coaching certification from “Performance Consultants International”, the pioneer and global leader of coaching in the workplace. She uses the “GROW Model” as a framework in conversations, meetings, and everyday leadership for problem solving, goal setting, performance improvement, and to unlock potential and possibilities.

Isabel is a Certified EOS Implementer®, helping companies leverage proven tools and processes to get what they want from their businesses.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Certified EOS Implementer
- President, People Traction
- Executive Coach
- Worked in Europe, North America, South America, and the Caribbean
- Fluent in Spanish and Portuguese

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- People Strategy
- People Development
- Executive + Team Coaching
- EOS, the Entrepreneurial Operating System®, is a complete set of simple concepts and practical tools that has helped thousands of entrepreneurs around the world get what they want from their businesses.

CONTACT



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TRACY L PRIGMORE

PRESIDENT & CEO

TLTSOLUTIONS + SHE HAS A DEAL.

Tracy L. Prigmore is an award-winning executive and the Founder of TLTSolutions, a real estate investment firm that owns, operates and develops commercial real estate. TLTSolutions provides unparalleled access and insight to alternative investments. Tracy's mission is to empower people to build generational wealth, and through TLTSolutions she creates opportunities for individuals, families and entities to obtain passive income by investing in residential, multifamily & hotel real estate.

The 2021 Person of the Year for Lodging Magazine, Tracy founded She Has a Deal (SHaD), a real estate investment firm that creates new pathways to hotel ownership and development for women.

AT-A-GLANCE

2024 - Present: Fund Manager,
The BOW Fund

2019 – Present: President + Founder,
She Has a Deal.

2016 - Present: President & CEO,
TLTSolutions Real Estate Investments

1992 - 2017: Hospital Administrator

SIGNATURE TOPICS

Real Estate Investing

Nine Stages to Hotel Ownership

Underwriting Real Estate Investments

Raising Capital through Syndication

Hotel Real Estate Asset Management

Property Management

CONTACT



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LESLEY ROBB

SWELL IMPACT | B CORP CERTIFIED

Lesley Robb is a sustainability and brand strategist who serves the travel, tourism, and hospitality sectors. With over 18 years of experience, her journey has been highlighted by collaborations with diverse clients, from small businesses to global brands like G Adventures, Discovery Adventures, and WestJet.

Lesley combines her skills in branding, sustainability, entrepreneurship, travel, and tourism to help businesses and destinations simplify sustainability and reimagine their brands as a force for good. She takes pride in shaping holistic and engaging brand stories, ethical communications, and sustainability strategies that centre people, places, and a positive vision for the future.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Founder, Swell Impact
- M.A., Sustainability Studies
- Representative for Eastern and Atlantic Canada, Green Destinations

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Sustainability in Hospitality + Tourism
- Becoming a Certified B Corporation
- Green Certifications
- Purpose-Driven Brand Strategies
- Communicating Your Impact
- Ethical Marketing + Communications
- Sustainable Entrepreneurship
- Sustainable Business Modeling

CONTACT



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JASMINE SELIGA

CEO AND FOUNDER OF AFFIXIFY

Jasmine has spent her entire career in hospitality technology. She has sold software personally, led incredibly talented technology sales teams, and consulted technology providers on how to best grow their new customer base. Jasmine has a passion for getting technology in the hands of the right buyer, and not wasting time in the sales process on unqualified conversations. She is a strong advocate for selling with integrity and has a vision for Affixify to be the catalyst that builds trust back between buyer and seller.

Jasmine is a proud wife, boy mom, and Christian.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Founder & CEO, Affixify
- Founder, Inspired Elevation Group
- Founder, Inspired Eleavtion Group ministries
- Former VP of Sales, & Marketing Digital Alchemy (later acquired by Amadeus)
- Speaker
- Podcast guest
- Faith based tech leader

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Navigating hotel technology
- Why pay-to-play doesn't work when choosing a tech stack
- Effectively leveraging your network as a founder
- Being a faith-based female founder
- Balancing being a founder and a parent

CONTACT



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ANNIE SIM

FOUNDER AND CHIEF EATING OFFICER AT THE TABLE LESS TRAVELED AND SAVOR FOOD TOURS

Annie Sim is a seasoned traveler and entrepreneur with over a decade of experience guiding travelers around the world. Her passion for culinary exploration began at 13, sparking a lifelong journey of immersing herself in diverse cultures and building deep connections with local communities.

In 2015, she founded The Table Less Traveled, a boutique travel operator specializing in intimate, handcrafted culinary experiences that open doors to private kitchens, family-run businesses, and off-the-beaten path cultural encounters through her trusted network of hosts. She later expanded her mission with Savor Food Tours, introducing food lovers to local best bites through storytelling, insider access, and relationships with chefs, artisans, and restaurateurs.

Annie believes food is a universal language—one that fosters connection, bridges cultures, and reveals the heart of a place. Her expertise in culinary travel has been featured in *Travel + Leisure*, *The Washington Post*, and more.

AT-A-GLANCE

Keynote Speaker at Bellevue Chamber of Commerce Gala 2023

Member of the Bellevue Culinary Tourism Network

Creator of the best “fun for foodies” multi-day tour in Italy voted by U.S. News

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- How to Craft Meaningful Travel Experiences
- Transformative Travel
- Small Tour Operators 101
- Women in the Travel Industry
- Fostering Connection with Remote/Hybrid Teams
- Work Life Integration as a Founder
- Emerging Trends: Culinary Travel

CONTACT



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STEPHANIE SMITH

CEO & DIGITAL MATRIARCH COGWHEEL MARKETING & ANALYTICS

Meet Stephanie Sparks Smith, CHDM whose passion is educating the hotel industry about hotel digital marketing who believes in data driven decision making. As digital marketing agency owner, education is still a large part of the job. She developed Cogwheel Analytics, a business intelligence (BI) tool that consolidates data from various sources, enabling companies to discern trends and providing them with a benchmarking scorecard, similar to a STR report. A regular speaker at numerous hospitality events and conferences, she is active with many hospitality organizations.

AT-A-GLANCE

2018 - Present: CEO & Digital Matriarch at Cogwheel Marketing & Analytics

2019 – Present: Partner & Consultant at Cayuga Hospitality Consultants

2020 - Present: HSMAI Marketing Advisory Board & Top 25 Minds of Sales, Marketing, Revenue Management

SIGNATURE TOPICS

Digital Marketing is more than ROAS

Benchmarking your Hotel Marketing KPIs like a STAR Report

How Marketing Contributes to Commercial Strategy

Maximizing your Hotel's Online Presence

CONTACT



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LEADERS IN HOSPITALITY





PREETI SURI

CO-FOUNDER & CEO | ADVENTURETRIPR

Preeti is a mountaineer, an avid hiker and traveler. She is on a mission to make adventure travel accessible to everyone by eliminating social, cultural and economic barriers while providing local guides and tour operators a level playing field.

Preeti is able to leverage her business acumen and experience across several functions, industries and geographies to make a lasting impact on travelers as well as travel providers through AdventureTripr.

She has been featured on Travel & leisure, Fodor's Travel and Puget Sound Business Journal and has been a guest on several podcasts and industry panels.

AT-A-GLANCE

Founder & CEO AdventureTripr

INSEAD MBA, CPA, Chartered Accountant

Career: Investment Banking & Global Leadership Program at HSBC, PwC, Deloitte, Ernst & Young

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Adventure Travel
- Sustainable Travel
- AI in Travel
- Fitness & Wellness Travel
- Inclusive Travel
- Building a Sustainable Business
- Bootstrapping a TravelTech Startup
- Building a Startup Team
- Startup Pivots & Business Models

CONTACT



IVANA TAGLIAMONTE

FOUNDER & OWNER OF BELLPORT INN

Ivana Tagliamonte opened the Bellport Inn on the South Shores of Long Island in 2021. Bellport Inn is a historic boutique hotel just 60 miles outside of New York City located in a quaint seaside community. Bellport Inn offers a luxurious stay in a serene and unique setting, that allows visitors to truly experience the local community of artisans, designers and makers. Locally made bath products, an honor bar of local wines and craft beers and locally created art and furniture are featured throughout.

As an award winning real estate agent in Manhattan for the last 25 years, Ivana has appeared on NY1 News and HGTV's Selling New York, and has been a featured speaker at national and international real estate and hospitality conferences.

AT-A-GLANCE

- 2025 - Speaker at Hotel Tech Conference
- 1999-Present - Real Estate Advisor, Compass, New York
- 2008 - 2013 HGTV Selling NY Series
- Public Speaker at National and International Conferences
- International Presence - Italy/US

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Real Estate Investing and 1031s
- Hotel Operations and Openings
- “Native Retail” Experiences
- Building Your Brand
- Employee and Team Empowerment
- Cultivating Your “Why”
- Incorporating Local Community
- Utilizing Technology to Improve the Guest Experience

CONTACT

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www.Ivana-Kyle.com





HEATHER TURNER CEO OF TAMARACK CAPITAL PARTNERS

Mrs. Turner is the CEO of Tamarack Capital Partners, a privately held real estate investment firm engaged in the acquisition, redevelopment, and management of hospitality and mixed-use real estate assets. The firm partners with top-tier institutional and high-net-worth investors to enhance value in full-service hotels and resorts.

Heather is actively involved in numerous professional and educational organizations, including the American Hotel Lodging Association's Investment Roundtable, the Angeleno Gold chapter of YPO and ULI's Hotel Development Council. She has served on the boards of the Hospitality Asset Managers Association, PS1 Pluralistic School in Santa Monica, CA, and the Florida State University Alumni Association.

Ms. Turner is a repeat guest lecturer on real estate investments at the University of Southern California, Santa Clara University, FSU, and the Anderson Graduate School of Business at UCLA. She earned a BS, magna cum laude, from Florida State University and an MBA from Harvard Business School.

AT-A-GLANCE

- 2018 - Present: CEO, Co-Founder Tamarack Capital Partners
- 2013 - 2018: Managing Partner at DiNapoli Capital Partners
- 2006 - 2012: Director, Broadreach Capital Partners
- 2004 - 2012: Head of Western Region/Vice President, Maritz Wolff & Co.
- 2001 - 2004: Director, Business Planning & Development, The Walt Disney Co.
- 1999-2000 Harvard Business School, MBA

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Hotel Acquisitions, Asset Management, and Dispositions
- Investment in opportunistic and value-add commercial real estate
- Institutional Capital Raising

CONTACT



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<https://tamarackcp.com/>





LEANNE TURNER

CO-FOUNDER AND COO, ALŌ INDEX

Leanne is a New York City based travel industry professional with 20 years of experience in hotel sales and corporate travel management. Throughout Leanne's hotel career at brands like Morgans Hotel Group, Peninsula Hotels, and Omni Hotels & Resorts, she focused on growing revenue across all vertical markets and ensuring exceptional operational execution. As a travel buyer at BNY Mellon, Leanne managed end-to-end supplier relationships, employee experience, the corporate aviation program, and brought a post-COVID Return to Travel multi-channel reeducation program from ideation to reality. Leanne has honed her persistence and insatiable curiosity – sometimes known as ADHD hyperfocus – into superpowers.

AT-A-GLANCE

2022 - Present: Co-Founder and COO, Alō Index

2020-2022: Vice President, Travel Operations, BNY Mellon

Named a 2023 Game Changer, Women Leading Travel & Hospitality

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Hotel Sustainability
- Business Travel Sales & Marketing
- Sustainability as a Service
- Buyer/Supplier Negotiation and Partnership
- B2B Enterprise SaaS Sales
- Neurodiversity in the Workplace
- Travel Data and Technology
- Sales Leadership & Development

CONTACT

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KATHERINE VAN HENGEL

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, THRUHIKE

Katherine van Hengel is a media and tech entrepreneur dedicated to building platforms that connect people, stories, and communities. As the founder of Thruhike, she has created a dynamic marketplace at the intersection of lifestyle, travel, and shopping, offering a curated space for discovering authentic recommendations and offerings. With a background in finance, operations, and impact-driven storytelling, Katherine has worked across startups, government, film, and corporate finance, including roles at J.P. Morgan, HeroX, and the Government of Bhutan. Beyond her entrepreneurial ventures, she is a passionate advocate for mental health awareness and serves on the boards of several nonprofits. She holds a BS from Cornell University and lives in Maine with her wife and two dogs.

AT-A-GLANCE

Co-Founder & CEO, Thruhike

Helping communities, businesses, & consumers grow & connect through a recommendation marketplace with profit-sharing tech that drives visibility & revenue

Executive Board Member, Bhutan Foundation & OCD New Hampshire

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Media Production & Narrative Strategy
- Building & Scaling Marketplaces
- Content Monetization & Platform Strategy
- Brand Development & Community Engagement
- Local & Sustainable Tourism Innovation
- Mental Health & the Workplace

CONTACT



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www.thruhike.io



ERIN WASHINGTON

CO-FOUNDER | SYLLOGI

Erin is the co-founder of Syllogi, a DC-based company that was founded on the belief that time is precious and travel is complicated. Syllogi's Travellers Club is an exclusive membership providing access to detailed travel intel from experts and fellow travellers. As masters of research, this boutique studio uses its years of travel expertise to make trip planning easier.

Erin is a steward of the industry. In her previous roles she launched a Master's in Global Hospitality Leadership program at Georgetown University, oversaw brand management of AC Hotels, and led loyalty innovation at Marriott International. She co-founded Syllogi during her Adult Gap Year exploring what her passions of hospitality, community, innovation, and culture mean around the world.



AT-A-GLANCE

Co-Founder of Syllogi

Former Georgetown University faculty

Previously in Brand and Loyalty with
Marriott International

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Membership Strategies and Innovation
- Loyalty
- Community Engagement for brands
- Luxury Hospitality
- Brand development and positioning
- Experience engineering

CONTACT

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www.syllogi.co





ROBIN ZEIDEL

FOUNDER, ZEIDEL & ASSOCIATES P.C.

Robin Zeidel is a skilled transactional attorney with over 25 years in the real estate and hospitality sectors. She brings a unique depth and breadth of experience, having worked as in-house counsel for Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc. and international law firms before starting Zeidel & Associates in 2010. Robin understands the differing roles and relationships between the parties – owners and developers, brands and managers, franchisees and franchisors, service providers and guests – which allows her to help clients make sound business decisions. She handles development, sales, acquisitions, hotel management, franchise, construction, vendor, and branding agreements, as well as operating agreements for food and beverage, spas, and other hotel amenities.

AT-A-GLANCE

Founder and Principal, Zeidel & Associates

Ranked in Chambers USA Guide for Leisure & Hospitality

Represents hospitality owners, developers, management companies, brands, franchisors, franchisees, restaurant groups and service providers

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Real Estate Contracts
- Buying and Selling Hotels
- Rebranding Hotels
- Food and Beverage Agreements
- Management Agreements
- Vendor Agreements
- Franchise Agreements
- Construction & Design Agreements

CONTACT



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AMY WALD FOUNDER & PRESIDENT GREENLUXE INC.

Nature and hospitality have always been Amy's twin passions. Her career on cruise ships sparked a deeper calling: to make travel both purposeful and sustainable. Armed with a degree in Sustainable Business and Wildlife, Amy pioneered an advisory firm at the intersection of sustainability and hospitality.

A dynamic speaker and skilled panel moderator, Amy captivates audiences with her insights and passion for sustainable hospitality. Her engaging presentations draw from extensive experience with luxury brands, showcasing the transformative power of green initiatives in hospitality.

Driven by her love for travel and reverence for nature, Amy continues to inspire industry leaders, turning complex sustainability concepts into actionable strategies that benefit both business and the environment.

SIGNATURE TOPICS

Sustainable Hospitality Topics:

- How to Use Sustainability As Your Unique Value Proposition
- Nature Based Hospitality and Tourism Workshops
- Efficient and Effective Hotel Operations
- The Business Case for Sustainable Hotels
- Sustainable Finance

Career:

Mapping Your Past: Blueprint for a Fulfilling Career

AT-A-GLANCE

- President Greenluxe Inc.
- Global Market Research Lead Sustainable Hospitality
- Cruise Ship Career
- Sustainable Business and Wildlife Management
- Podcast Host, The Sustainable Hospitality Podcast
- LEED G.A./ISSP, SA/GSTC/WELL/TRUE

CONTACT



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www.greenluxeinc.com



LYNN ZWIBAK

FOUNDER | ZWIBAK COMMERCIAL STRATEGY



Lynn Zwibak is a revenue management expert and educator. She has led revenue management efforts at hotels of all types and sizes in the U.S., Asia, and Africa and is an adjunct professor at Virginia Tech University. Her experience on property, in the classroom, and living and working abroad gives her the unique ability to explain complicated topics to people from all backgrounds.

Lynn is on a mission to eliminate the struggle between revenue management and other hospitality disciplines (especially sales, where she began her career). By educating non-revenue managers on revenue management concepts, she facilitates the unification of all commercial strategy disciplines.

As a trainer, speaker, and professor, she uses personal anecdotes from her experiences at home and abroad to make revenue management accessible and engaging. Her infectious energy and passion inspire participants to integrate these concepts into their daily workflow.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Founder of Zwibak | Revenue Management
- Experience in group sales and marketing
- Author of The Study Guide for the CRMA and the certification exam (HSMAI)
- Published in various industry publications
- International experience
- Adjunct professor at Virginia Tech University
- CRME, CHDM, CHIA, CHE
- BS from the Cornell Hotel School & MBA from Duke University

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Revenue Mgmt. for Non-Revenue Managers
- The Intersection of People and Technology
- Commercial Strategy Integration
- Promoting Women in Business
- Mental Health Awareness

CONTACT

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CRISTINA IMPERIAL CARL

FOUNDER & CEO | EDIPHI

Cristina Carl was born in the Philippines and immigrated to the U.S. at age 10. A graduate of Yale, she built a career in hospitality, working every job from dishwasher, cook, and server to management.

This experience led her to found Ediphi, a workforce training platform built from her experiences. The platform focuses on supporting underrepresented workers by providing them with the skills needed to thrive in the workforce.

Outside of business, Cristina is dedicated to philanthropy. She actively supports Thrive, a nonprofit that provides nutrient-dense meals to children, and she is a passionate advocate for women's health, drawing from her personal experience as a breast cancer survivor.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Founder Ediphi
- Certified Workforce Development Professional (CWDP)
- 20 yr Hospitality Operations Career
- Techstars Boston 2023 Cohort
- Raised \$1.5 million
- SXSW Speaker
- Yale University-BA

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Thriving After Cancer: Lessons in Resilience and Leadership
- Women Entrepreneurs in Tech
- AI & Transforming Workforce Training
- Tech-Driven Diversity: Promoting Equity in Workforce Training
- Tech Solutions for Employee Retention in Hospitality
- AI in CTE: Addressing Opportunity Gaps

CONTACT



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SARAH DIEHL

FOUNDER & PRINCIPAL EMPOWERED HOSPITALITY

A foodie from a young age, Sarah began her career with Hillstone Restaurant group before finding her passion in Training and Human Resources. After her position leading HR for a NYC restaurant group was eliminated, Sarah realized that numerous small hospitality businesses desperately needed HR guidance but lacked the resources or know-how to hire an HR Director. Sarah instinctively pivoted many of her initial interviews into strategy sessions focused on the HR needs of each business, and Empowered Hospitality was born.

Empowered Hospitality has a team of over 25 HR and talent experts supporting hundreds of companies and thousands of employees across the US.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Founder & Principal, Empowered Hospitality
- Offering HR and Talent solutions to hundreds of growing hospitality businesses
- 2021 Tory Burch Foundation Fellow
- James Beard Foundation Women's Advisory Board
- Featured Speaker: Various James Beard Foundation conferences, The FAB Conference, New York Restaurant Show, Boston University School of Hospitality Administration
- Yale University-BS

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Building Thriving Hospitality Teams
- Difficult Employee Conversations
- Bridging the Gap in a Multigenerational Workforce
- A Strategic Approach to Employee Benefits
- The Restaurant Recruiting Playbook
- Building an HR Function from the Ground Up

CONTACT



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AMMA KWATENG

FOUNDER | TRIPCRED

Amma is the founder of @TripCred. She has visited over 35+ countries across 6 continents and has a passion where luxury travel meets local and authentic experiences. She anchors the company around vibe and atmosphere so that the desired experience matches the lived experience you will get.

Amma has an extensive almost 20+ year career in marketing, sales & and operations where she was a senior leader at Microsoft and DoorDash. She's appeared in various publications and events throughout her career on topics like women in corporate America or climbing the corporate ladder. She received her business degree from Wharton, University of Pennsylvania. In addition to travel, dance and music also bring her joy.

AT-A-GLANCE

Founder TripCred, a Travel Advisor Agency

Former DoorDash Merchant Experience Global Leader

Former Microsoft Marketing, Sales, and Operations Senior Leader

Wharton, University of Pennsylvania Alumni

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- What's Next in Travel Technology
- Women in Corporate America
- Change Management
- Leader vs. Manager vs. Boss
- Choosing the Best Path at the Fork in the Road of Your Career

CONTACT

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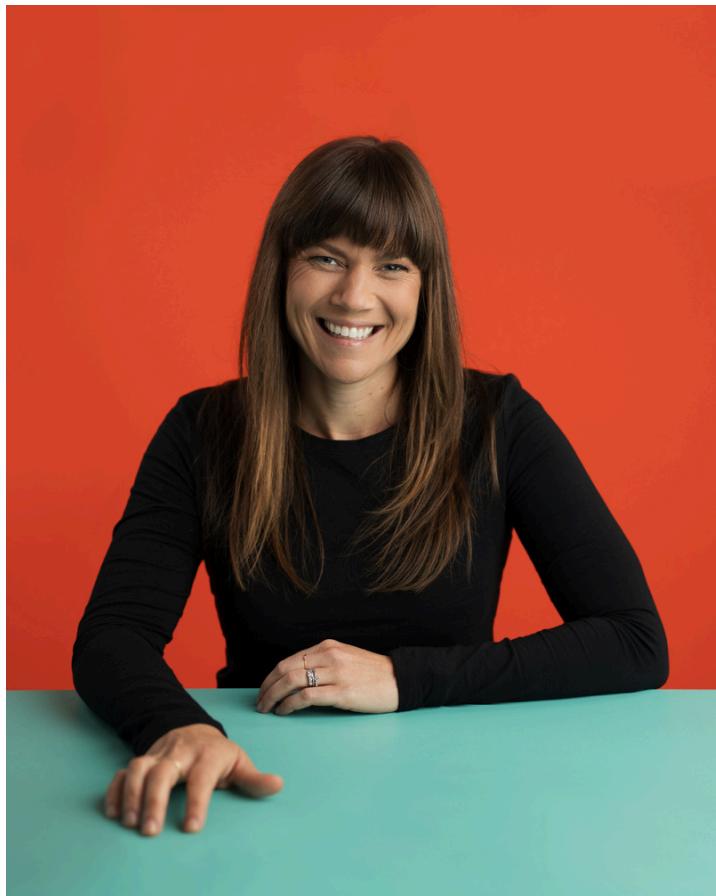


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LEIGH SILKUNAS

CEO & FOUNDER 1AX CONSULTING

With 15+ years of experience in the hospitality industry and a natural aptitude for analytics, Leigh Silkunas is passionate about driving top-line revenue for hospitality brands. Leigh started her career in New York City as a revenue management trainee and advanced through progressively senior revenue management and digital marketing roles with Starwood, Kimpton, and Commune Hotels. She served as the first head of marketing at Sonder, where she led the innovative startup through its rebrand, launch, and beyond. She has been recognized in Hotel Management Magazine's Thirty Under 30 list.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Penn State Hospitality Grad, CHDM, CRME
- Led Digital Marketing teams for Kimpton and Commune for 5+ years
- Tapped to rebrand Flatbook to Sonder, leading to a successful Series B.
- Founded 1AX Consulting with clients that include 1 Hotels, Proper Hotels, Makeready, Sage Hospitality, AutoCamp

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- “Set-Jetting” and how our directory website, The Real Hotels, capitalizes on that trend.
- Digital Marketing workshops and training
- Tactical digital marketing strategies that work for boutique hotels.

CONTACT



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TAVISHI GUPTA

CEO & FOUNDER TERN

Tavishi Gupta is the founder of Tern, a company redefining the travel planning experience. Tern offers an AI travel planner that crafts hyper-personalized trips in 30 seconds. They have helped travelers from 120 countries curate over 10k trips!

Before founding Tern, Tavishi was a PM at Microsoft, where she collaborated with automotive leaders like Audi and Honda Racing, later transitioning to healthcare software engineering. Her entrepreneurial journey began when she co-founded a startup that enables Grammy-winning artists to collaborate and showcase their work. She also conducted advanced research on drones and robotics at Stanford and UW-Madison.

As the daughter of an Indian Army officer, Tavishi grew up with a love for exploration and a resilient spirit. Having lived in 15 cities over three years, she brings a rich global perspective to her mission of delivering seamless, joyful travel experiences and empowering the next generation of explorers.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Product & software engineering at Microsoft
- Slow traveler for 3 years, lived in 15 cities
- Awarded Women of Impact 2023 by Women Impact Tech
- Co-founded Samply, an audio-tech company - raised over \$1 Million
- Researcher - HCI at Stanford, ML at UW-Madison

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Gen AI in Travel
- AI at Airports
- Enhancing Passenger Experience
- Women in Leadership
- Next Gen Travelers

CONTACT



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MITA CARRIMAN

FOUNDER | ADVENTURELY

Mita Carriman is the CEO and Founder of Adventurely, a booking site for coworking day passes to hotels, restaurants, cafes, cowork studios and 3rd spaces. Named one of the Top 50 Global Remote Work Influencers by Remote.com in 2024, Mita spent the past 8 years traveling while working remotely full time across 18 countries, 26 cities. Her extensive global experience gave her unique insights into the challenges and opportunities remote workers face, which she channels into creating innovative solutions through Adventurely.

Mita's work with Adventurely has been featured by Harvard Business Review, Fast Company, Forbes, NY Post, and Nasdaq. Prior to her work with Adventurely Mita spent 10 years as an IP Attorney in New York, serving as legal counsel to a range of startups, companies, and non-profits.

AT-A-GLANCE

Founder of Adventurely, a booking site for coworking day passes to hotels, restaurants, cafes, cowork studios & 3rd spaces

Remote work advocate

8 years working remotely around the world

Backed by Techstars & Google

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Bleisure travel
- Coworking
- Business travel
- digital nomadism
- Hospitality tech
- Upselling Hospitality Spaces
- Work from anywhere

CONTACT

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<http://www.adventurely.app>





JESSIE FISCHER

FOUNDER & CEO | GUESTOS

Jessie Fischer grew up in hospitality near Yosemite, where welcoming guests was more than a job—it was a way of life. By 12, she was fully immersed in running her family's hotels, learning firsthand what it takes to create unforgettable stays.

After a decade helping founders scale early-stage startups, she saw a way to bridge hospitality and technology. That inspired her to build GuestOS, an AI-powered platform that helps hotels increase revenue by personalizing guest experiences through voice and SMS concierge services.

Her journey has been about combining the warmth of hospitality with the power of AI to create seamless, more meaningful guest experiences.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Founder, GuestOS
- Member, Yosemite Tourism Board
- Speaker & Advocate for Hospitality Innovation
- Early-stage startup operator

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- AI & ML in Hospitality
- Building a Brand in Travel
- The Intersection of Hospitality & Technology
- Scaling & Operational Efficiency in Hospitality Businesses

CONTACT

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 www.guestos.ai



AMANDA STAERKER

FOUNDER | ALLÉE

BOUTIQUE DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

Amanda is the founder of Allée Boutique Design & Development, specializing in ground-up boutique hotels, resorts, and mixed-use developments across Florida and the Caribbean, expanding into global markets.

Allée creates vibrant places of distinction that help people recharge and connect with their world. We help developers and investors evaluate the economic, environmental, and experiential aspects of land. Insights are shaped into master plans and business plans, subsequently implementing the vision through development management

Her worldwide headquarters is in Miami and she gravitates toward adventure travel that challenges both body and mind.

AT-A-GLANCE

Founder, Allée

Boutique Design & Development

Real Estate

Vision X Value

Member, Urban Land Institute

Alumni University of Florida

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Finding Your Value
- Beyond the Blueprint: Crafting a Vision That Drives Value
- Build In Public: The Power of Transparency in Growth

CONTACT



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VICTORIA POLK

CO-FOUNDER & CFO | TRAMETER

Victoria is Trameter's CFO & Head of Partnerships, where she leads strategic negotiations, global partnerships, and the company's fast-growing B2B program. With over 15 years of experience in the travel industry, Victoria blends financial acumen with deep insights to power Trameter's growth.

A licensed travel agent and graduate of Cornell University's School of Hotel Management, Victoria's journey has spanned running her own successful travel agency and working with American Express's travel division. At Trameter, she has negotiated nearly \$1 million in deals and forged partnerships with six global travel brands. She also led Trameter to secure IATAN and ARC travel licenses—rare accomplishments among early-stage travel startups, granting access to over a million hotels and 95% of airlines worldwide.

She also oversees Trameter's operations and customer service while collaborating with the engineering team to ensure a seamless & user-centric travel planning experience.

AT-A-GLANCE

- CFO and Head of Partnerships at Trameter
 - driving negotiations, partnerships, and B2B programs.
- Licensed Travel Agent with 15+ years of industry expertise.
- Cornell University Graduate with a BS in Hotel Management.
- Negotiated nearly \$1M in deals and secured 6+ global partnerships with major travel brands.

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Scaling B2B Programs in Travel
- Global Partnerships & Strategic Negotiations
- Operational Excellence in Travel Tech
- Building Seamless, User-Centric Travel Experiences
- Women in Leadership
- AI, Personalization & Travel Technology

CONTACT

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KATIE WANZER

CO-FOUNDER | WISCO HOSTS & THE REFRESH COLLECTION



Katie is a hospitality entrepreneur and the Co-Founder of Wisco Hosts, a company that provides services focused on the short-term rental real estate industry. The company's portfolio consists of seven vacation properties in Door County. She is also a Co-Founder and Partner of The Refresh Collection, a boutique hospitality company that specializes in thoughtfully reimagined historic properties, including the popular Fresh Coast Motel and Spruce & Shore Motel in Door County, Wisconsin.

Katie has over a decade's worth of experience in the public relations and communications field. Prior to hospitality, she was a global communications leader for a global manufacturer where she was responsible for providing internal communications support for the company's Global Commercial and Global Field Operations functions across six continents.

Katie holds a master's degree in Business with an emphasis in public relations and marketing from Concordia University, and a bachelor's degree in Journalism from the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Co-Founder & Partner of boutique motel hospitality business
- Co-Founder of short-term rental business with seven locations in scenic Door County, Wisconsin
- Former public relations & global communications professional with 10+ years experience
- Holds Master's in Marketing & Public Relations and Bachelor's in Journalism

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Scaling Your Hospitality Business
- Operational Excellence Using Multiple Technology Systems
- How To Build a Trusted Brand in Large Markets
- Benefits of Public Relations When Building Your Personal & Business Brand
- Personalized Guest Experience With Tech

CONTACT



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JESSICA KRAMER

OPERATING PARTNER | TECHNE INFINITI VENTURES

Jessica Kramer is hospitality technology entrepreneur, advisor and operating partner in Techni Infiniti Ventures, a vertical fund for hospitality and travel technology.

Jessica has spent 18+ years in hospitality and hospitality tech as a founder and GTM leader with several exits at companies including TravelClick (now Amadeus), ALICE (now Actabl), and Sevenrooms. She is an advisor to hospitality tech companies including Curacity, Dragonfly, eTip, Intelicity, StaynTouch, FoodPrintGroup, Directful, Xanderpay, Global Charter Services (Buster), Kismet, Rezylst, and others. She is passionate about elevating the hospitality industry by applying best-in-class technology to significant industry challenges to drive transformation.

Jessica is a graduate of Brown University and NYU Law and lives on the Lower East Side in New York City.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Venture Fund Operating Partner at Techne Infiniti Ventures
- GTM and Leadership Coach for hospitality startup founders and technology cos
- 18+ Years in Hospitality Tech as an entrepreneur, founder and executive
- Passionate about elevating womens voices

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Hospitality and Travel Technology
- VC Investment
- Leadership / Women's Leadership
- Go-To-Market, Revenue, and Scaling a Company
- Personalized Guest Experience / Operations
- Operational Excellence in Travel Tech

CONTACT

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A professional headshot of Sara Murray, a woman with blonde hair, wearing a white sleeveless top with a yellow and black abstract print. She is smiling and looking towards the camera.

SARA MURRAY

CEO | PROSPECTING ON PURPOSE

Sara Murray is a sales consultant, trainer, speaker and podcast host working with leaders and sales teams to unlock the untapped potential in their prospecting and business development efforts. Her platform, Prospecting on Purpose, empowers professionals via her virtual and in-person workshops to enhance their communication skills, approach prospecting creatively, confidently connect with clients, and address business needs rather than simply push products.

As the host of the popular podcast "Prospecting on Purpose," Sara provides a valuable platform for discussions on prospecting, sales, business strategies, and mindset, leaving listeners with tangible takeaways and increased confidence.

Sara has a long tenure with the hospitality industry, working with the world's top luxury brands, developers, design consultants, and property direct teams. She is passionate about prioritizing the human to human connection, especially in today's digital landscapes.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Sales Consultant, Trainer and Speaker
- 18+ Years in Global Hospitality & Commercial Construction
- Forbes Travel Guide Speaker + Brand Official Sales Consultant
- Demo reel at: saramurray.com/speaking

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Beyond The Brochure: Positioning Your Property to Win B2C & B2B Business
- Prospecting on Purpose: Lead with Confidence. Sell Without Selling.
- Boundaries as Connectors: Building cohesive multi-generational workforce.

CONTACT

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FEMALE FOUNDERS IN HOSPITALITY

STACY SILVER

PRESIDENT | SILVER HOSPITALITY GROUP



Hospitality B2B expert with extensive knowledge and connections in all aspects of the hospitality industry, including ownership, branding, management, financing, technology, design, and purchasing. Specializing in strategic planning, trade public relations, branding strategies, trade marketing and advertising.

Strong track record of assisting companies with brand strategic direction and launches; key partnership relationships; marketing collateral and events such as roundtables and specialty corporate conferences; as well as hospitality industry focus groups.

Founder and President of Silver Hospitality Group, a boutique B2B strategic consultancy trusted by some of the most recognizable names in hospitality. Known for bringing together decision-makers across all verticals of the industry and creating powerful, content-driven programs that generate exposure and real results. Whether launching a new brand, reinvigorating a legacy company, or elevating a leader's voice, SHG helps clients craft and share the stories that set them apart.

Words to Live By: "Being authentic is more important than being right or perfect."

AT-A-GLANCE

- 35 Years Hospitality B2B Experience
- Deep Industry Network & Media Savvy
- Named one of Hotel Management's Inaugural Most Influential Women In Hospitality
- Pillsbury Institute for Hospitality Entrepreneurship Board Member

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- B2B Marketing & PR - Share Your Story
- Networking: Build Relationships That Build Your Business
- Moderator/Industry Insights: Hotel Investment & Development

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SARAH DUSEK

**CEO & CO-FOUNDER | FEW & FAR LLC |
ENYGMA VENTURES LLC | AUTHOR**

Sarah Dusek is a visionary entrepreneur, investor, and changemaker who sold her first company, Under Canvas, for over \$100M.

As the founder of Enygma Ventures, she's empowered over 10,000 women across Africa to build investor-ready businesses.

Today, she leads Few & Far, a groundbreaking climate-positive travel company reimagining safaris and regenerating 100,000 hectares in South Africa.

A dynamic speaker and author of *Thinking Bigger*, Sarah inspires audiences with bold insights on scaling businesses, unlocking capital, and using business as a force for good.



AT-A-GLANCE

- Serial Entrepreneur & Investor
- Author & Advocate
- Sustainable Tourism Leader

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Regenerative Travel,
- Business as a force for good
- Inspiring female founders
- Thinking Bigger

CONTACT



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ASHLEY O'NEAL

FOUNDER | SUMMERSIDE CREATIVE

Ashley's digital marketing journey began in 2015 in hospitality, where she found her passion for crafting compelling brand narratives. She has since led national strategies, including for an 80+ location restaurant franchise, and collaborated with major brands like the NFL, Hilton, and Marriott. With a decade of experience as a wedding photographer, her work has been featured in Bon Appétit and Garden & Gun. This blend of marketing and photography expertise led her to create Summerside Creative, a full-service agency helping hospitality and lifestyle brands thrive through strategic, visually compelling content.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Nationally published photographer
- 13 years of social media management experience
- 10 years hospitality & restaurant marketing experience

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Hotel & Restaurant Social Media Marketing
- Photo & Video Best Practices
- Branding and Social Media Impacts
- Hotel & Restaurant Marketing

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SERENA KOIVURINTA MANAGING DIRECTOR, FAGERHOLM

Serena is the owner-operator of Fagerholm Island, an exclusive full buy-out retreat in Finland's Turku Archipelago. She runs every aspect of the business—embedding sustainability, building partnerships, driving sales and marketing, managing operations, and growing the team. Coming into hospitality from consulting and FinTech, Serena brings a fresh perspective, showing that ownership can be hands-on and personal.

Beyond Fagerholm, Serena invests in early-stage startups as an angel and Venture Partner at a female-focused VC fund. She also supports businesses in food & beverage and technical manufacturing with strategy, business development, and marketing. Previously, she advised global insurers and wealth managers at Deloitte, led multimillion-pound campaigns at BMW, and built the product function at a FinTech in London.

AT-A-GLANCE

- 10+ years in financial services and consulting in London
- Former FinTech Head of Product
- Managing Director of exclusive buy-out property in Finland
- Supporting a European family business investment portfolio
- Venture Partner and Angel investor
- UK and Finland

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Shifting Careers
- Hands-On Ownership
- Sustainable Hospitality
- Investing in Female Founders
- Demystifying Venture Capital
- Getting Started with Angel Investing

CONTACT



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JENNIFER BRADSHAW OWNER & PRINCIPAL ADVISOR SAVOR FARE TRAVEL CO.

Jenn Bradshaw is the Founder and Principal Advisor of Savor Fare Travel Co., a luxury boutique travel agency known for culturally immersive, culinary-inspired journeys that go beyond the ordinary. An ASTA member and Certified Travel Expert, Jenn also has a small events business that creates engaging networking experiences for local small/mid size businesses.

Adopted from the Philippines and raised in the Virginia, Jenn found her first sense of belonging on a transformational trip to Bali—an experience that awakened her passion for travel as a tool for healing, reinvention, and connection. Today, she speaks on hospitality, emotional intelligence, and the power of travel to transform lives.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Founder & Principal Advisor of Savor Fare Travel Co., a luxury boutique travel agency specializing in culturally immersive, culinary-inspired journeys.
- Advocate for empathy and emotional intelligence in hospitality to create more meaningful client experiences.

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- The Power of Reinvention: Why Divorce, Setbacks, and “Starting Over” Can Be Your Greatest Comeback
- Designing Experiences, Not Just Itineraries
- The Soul of Hospitality: Blending Business Strategy With Human-Centered Care
- Redefining Hospitality Through Empathy & Emotional Intelligence

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ELENA PAPADONIKOLAKI

CEO & FOUNDER OF BOUTIQUE SETTERS

Driven by a passion to revolutionize the hospitality landscape, especially in the realm of Boutique Hotels.

Committed to introducing innovative approaches, from leveraging cutting-edge technology to implementing sustainable practices, and redefining industry norms.

Empowering independent hoteliers & supporting growth by fostering connections with Industry solution providers.

With a solid background of 25+ years of experience in luxury hospitality management, a relentless pursuit of excellence, and a drive for innovation, I am devoted to shaping a future where Boutique Hotels and lifestyle experiences raise the bar higher than ever before.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Founder of the 1st Boutique Hospitality Hub Worldwide
- Boutique Hotelier
- Chair at the Boardroom Greece - Advocate of Diversity & Inclusion
- Commercial Strategist

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- The Power of Community
- Women in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry
- Diversity & Inclusion in the Corporate World
- Daring to be different in a competitive landscape

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SARA BACON

FOUNDER OF OPULIST

As someone deeply inspired by beauty and good design, Sara created Opulist out of the desire for a search platform that simplifies how we discover the most beautifully designed places to stay, eat, and drink. Rooted in aesthetics and appreciating the full sensory experience when it comes to travel and eating out, Opulist merges tech with hospitality, travel, and F&B to make finding stylish, well-curated destinations effortless.

Sara uses her background in marketing, PR, sales, and Human Design to take to a strategic, creative, and intuitive approach to growing Opulist as a brand and a business.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Founder of Opulist
- Grew Opulist's online community to 90k+ followers in 2 years
- Human Design Expert
- Digital Marketing and PR experience across multiple industries

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Neuroaesthetics: The Science Behind Why Beauty Matters
- Creating an online community of engaged brand enthusiasts
- Using Human Design to optimize your energy and make aligned decisions in your work

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SELENE DI FLAMMINIO

FOUNDER OF TERRA COLLECTION

Selene is the founder of TERRA Collection, a boutique U.S.-based representation company rooted in design, authenticity, and sustainability. With over 15 years of sales experience across Europe, the U.S., and Asia, she has built a reputation for visionary positioning, compelling storytelling, and cultivating relationships that translate into measurable results. Her ultimate goal is not only to strengthen a hotel's presence in the U.S. luxury market but to directly grow ROI and market share through the right strategies and advisor connections. Today, Selene partners with independent hotels and resorts to bring their stories to life and drive sustainable growth in the U.S. luxury market, while also serving on the board of AVANCE Collective, where she supports education, philanthropy, and community impact in travel.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Founder of TERRA Collection
- 15+ years of international luxury hospitality and sales experience
- Advocate for design, sustainability, and purpose-driven hospitality
- Board member of AVANCE Collective, a travel industry non-profit

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- How Hotels, Resorts & DMC can succeed in the U.S. luxury market
- Positioning properties through authentic design & cultural narratives
- Trends shaping advisor relationships, digital evolution, and sustainability
- How industry collectives like AVANCE foster impact and resilience

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ELBIA EDDAIKRA

FOUNDER OF BE ESSENTIAL CLUB & ODIA SOLUTIONS INC.

Elbia is the CEO and Founder of Be Essential, a leading French luxury destination management company, and Odia Solutions Inc., an innovative SaaS travel technology venture. A graduate of the prestigious Glion Institute of Higher Education in Luxury Hotel Management, she brings over a decade of international hospitality experience with renowned brands such as Starwood Hotels & Resorts and Accor Hotels, as well as collaborations with Michelin-starred chefs.

With her dual expertise as both a DMC founder and a tech entrepreneur, Elbia is committed to redefining excellence in luxury travel and creating personalized, seamless solutions that bridge the worlds of hospitality and technology.

AT-A-GLANCE

- CEO & Founder of Be Essential (luxury DMC) and Odia Solutions Inc. (SaaS travel technology)
- Graduate of Glion Institute in Luxury Hotel Management
- 10+ years international hospitality experience with Starwood Hotels & Resorts, Accor Hotels, and Michelin-starred chefs
- Expert in luxury travel & guest experience, spanning California, New York, and Europe
- Passionate innovator bridging hospitality and technology to deliver seamless, personalized solutions

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Redefining Luxury Travel in the Digital Age
- Crafting Unforgettable Guest Journeys
- Bridging Hospitality and Technology
- Entrepreneurship in Hospitality: From DMC to Tech Founder
- The Future of Bespoke Travel

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ANNIE PEZZA

FOUNDER OF PINERY

Annie Pezza, founder of Pinery, is motivated by innovative ideas and solutions that foster human connection, especially when they align with environmental and cultural awareness. She is passionate about travel and believes that traveling consciously is one of the greatest connectors — with the power to bring out the best in humanity.

This passion led her to create Pinery, a travel platform built for those who want to explore the world with intention. Through curated itineraries, storytelling, and community, Pinery empowers travelers to connect meaningfully with the places they visit and to travel in ways that are culturally respectful and environmentally conscious.

AT-A-GLANCE

- Founder of Pinery
- Guest on Travel Trends Podcast, Key Travel Trends for 2025
- Advocate for sustainability, and purpose-driven hospitality
- Building brands via the power of storytelling
- Passionate about AI assisting strong human connection, not replacing it.

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Community-driven travel with Pinery
- Empowering women travelers and their stories
- Amplifying travel and hospitality brands through storytelling
- Using AI to personalize and simplify travel planning
- Building purpose-driven brands in travel and hospitality

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