

# HOTELS

## PREFERRED HOTELS EXPANDS PARTNERSHIP WITH CONFERENCEDIRECT



Preferred Hotels & Resorts has expanded its strategic partnership with ConferenceDirect, the global meetings solutions provider.

Preferred is ConferenceDirect's only independent hotel partner, boosting the brand's increasing influence in the meetings and events sector. Through the enhanced partnership, Preferred will receive privileged opportunities to promote its independent hotel portfolio to the company's 450 global associates working with over 4,400 clients.

Meanwhile, associates of ConferenceDirect will receive dedicated training for individual member hotels in Preferred's global portfolio, which includes 650 luxury hotels, and insight into their offerings.



Cheryl Williams, chief revenue officer, Preferred Hotels & Resorts.

Member hotels looking to plug further into the partnership can get more favorable terms and new marketing opportunities if they participate in ConferenceDirect’s Preferred Partner Program.

“As the go-to for global meetings solutions, it is an honor for Preferred Hotels & Resorts to be the only independent hotel brand to work with them on this scale and demonstrates our growing influence and commitment to this important travel segment,” said Cheryl Williams, chief revenue officer of Preferred.

While leisure travel continues to hold steady in most markets, the ‘leisure bubble’ seems to be deflating and beginning to normalize. However, this change in pattern is motivating hotels to rely on MICE bookings. Some members are bullish in their approach to the segment, adding more diverse options to prioritize groups and events while incorporating meeting technology and sustainability efforts.

Preferred’s sales team is working on growing its route-to-market agreement for its MICE-ready properties, including the partnership with ConferenceDirect. As a result, Preferred has recorded a 22% rise in hotel arrivals worldwide for its meetings portfolio compared to



Jerry Horan, CEO, ConferenceDirect.

2022 so far. In the four months till the end of this year, bookings in production already surpass 2022 for the same time by 28%. November 2023 is ahead of the same time last year by 37%.

“We are excited to partner with Preferred Hotels & Resorts and their portfolio of exceptional independent properties. The partnership allows us to provide our customers with truly unique and premium options, showcasing the best possible meeting locations,” said Jerry Horan, CEO, ConferenceDirect.