

THE WORLD'S ONLY GLOBAL RETAIL AND LEISURE MAGAZINE

RLI

RETAIL & LEISURE INTERNATIONAL

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JUNE 2022 ISSUE 173

GLOBAL FOCUS

DAMAC PROPERTIES SHAPING THE FUTURE



MANGO
**Inspiring the
World**

NORTH SAILS
**Go Beyond
Sustainable Retail**

RUBY HOTELS
**Make Your
Own Story**

ASIA & AUSTRALASIA | DECATHLON | GMG | GREEN INITIATIVES | URBAN REGENERATION



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Cover Story

DAMAC Properties have been moulding the Middle East's luxury real estate market for the past 20 years, delivering iconic residential, commercial and leisure properties across Dubai and beyond.



Editor's Foreword

After what has felt like the shortest month of May ever, we arrive with our June issue and featured this month is a raft of news, views and interviews across the sectors of retail and leisure. Included this month is a focus on Asia & Australasia and we also take a deep dive into the topics of Green Initiatives and Urban Regeneration, plenty to keep you occupied as we build towards the summer.

James Quinn, Editor



Publisher's Comment

After another busy month with MAPIC Italy in Milan and a two week trip to Dubai and Riyadh, plans are progressing well for our events in Riyadh at the end of October with exciting announcements to follow in the days ahead. Meanwhile I am pleased to welcome Ventura Mall by DAMAC Properties as our latest Category Sponsor for RLI Entertainment & Leisure Operator of the year at this year's Global RLI Awards.

Read more about DAMAC Properties in this month's Cover Story as we interview Ali Sajwani, General Manager of DAMAC Properties to discuss their recent developments and future plans as they continue to deliver luxury, iconic residential, commercial and leisure properties across the Middle East and new international markets.

In 2019 many of you may know that I chose to do something truly extraordinary, something many dream of, something people try but only few achieve, something that gave me a great sense of accomplishment, lifelong memories and friendships... Leg one of the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race from London to Uruguay as a member of the UNICEF team. After a two year suspension due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 'Race' restarted in March and they are now on their way to Bermuda where they will be preparing for the final Leg of the race, Bermuda to New York to Derry, Londonderry, returning to London on the 30 July. I have spent the last two years waiting to rejoin the race for this final leg but due to work commitments I cannot take 6 weeks leave, however I am looking forward to flying to NY this month to catch up with my team and help with final preparations... GO UNICEF!

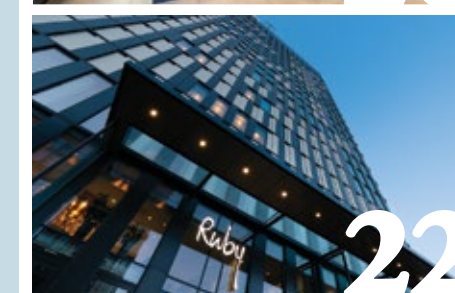
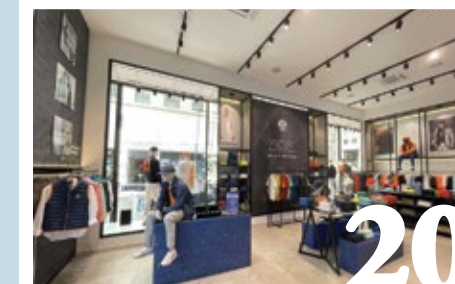
Enjoy the read!

Jayne Rafter, Publisher

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who's who in retail

RLI MEETS

Fabrizio Brogi

CHAIRMAN AT NAU!

Founded in 2004 by the current Chairman Fabrizio Brogi and based in Castiglione Olona in Varese, the historical Italian eyewear district, NAU! is characterised by a constant path of growth, internationalisation and innovation, and it operates a business model that is driven by sustainability. In NAU!'s vision eyewear are a fashion accessory, characterised by design, colour, quality, comfort and respect for the environment. Today the company operates 180 stores and releases a new collection every two weeks.

Q. Given the changing market conditions throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, have you had to alter or re-evaluate your key objectives moving forward?

For sure we had to review the timing and the release of so many projects. On the other side of this though, I must stress that the pandemic crisis didn't affect the eyewear business like other businesses. For instance, just after the lockdown periods we continued opening new shops in Italy and abroad with existing partners as well as new ones.

Q. How would you say the Covid-19 outbreak affected your business, and will it have any long-term effects on your plans moving forward?

It is strange to say this but Covid-19 is going to have quite a lot of positive effects in the medium term. We've been obliged to accelerate so many processes and innovative projects. The digital and omni-channel side of our business has surged forward, resulting in process and product innovation.

Q. What key leadership skills do you feel are the most important in the current retail climate?

Taking care of your people's overall wellbeing is still an absolute must. This is pivotal to attract talent, retain that talent and then mobilise all of your teams to exploit the great potential of the company.

Q. As a leader, when making key strategic decisions, what proportion of the decision do you feel is fact-based and what proportion is instinctual?

A fact-based path with a clear decision process is fundamental. As well as this, listening to and managing your feelings is part of a conscious and effective process as well.

Q. Do you feel that CEOs and company leaders can continue to be transformational in the new retail landscape and will this actually be more important than ever now?

I absolutely believe this. To unlock the full company's potential you have to be transformational. All of the "core team" must be more and more mindful, resilient and adaptive in these challenging times.

Q. What do you make of social media and its prominent rise in importance over the last few years, and how important do you feel e-commerce and online activities will continue to be?

For e-commerce and online activities we prefer to talk about omni-channel activities. We tend to see our shops and our digital experience as one whole for our customers. Their importance is growing day by day. What is quite different is our attitude towards social media. This had been important in the past but for the moment we are not so sure about its future role in our strategy. To sum up, we look at them as a medium to communicate something meaningful to our customers, not just a place to show your presence or how many likes you have.

Q. What would you consider to be your career highlights?

Starting a brand new concept from scratch has been and continues to be a fantastic journey full of joy and fun.

Q. How are you feeling about the 12 months ahead?

I am definitely feeling optimistic. There will still be troubles and challenges to face in the future, but there will be more and more opportunities. We have spent the last two years doing our homework to enable ourselves to go and make the most of these opportunities.

Q. Do you have any words of warning for the industry as we continue to move through uncharted territory?

I really feel that any companies who have overcome the last two years and all the challenges that this has presented don't need any advice!

Q. Any final thoughts or anything else you would like to add?

I'm so grateful for all the friends I have made through travelling and I'm keen to meet the next ones, especially abroad.



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OUTLET SHOPPING & LEISURE

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RENEWED OFFER AT LIVERPOOL ONE SEES KICK GAME SIGN AND KENJI UPSIZE

Grosvenor today announces new retail activity at Liverpool ONE, where luxury footwear brand Kick Game has signed for a 3,500sq ft unit on South John Street. Kick Game will join Kenji, the Japanese-inspired homeware and stationary retailer, which is upsizing its store by 40 per cent.

Kick Game Liverpool ONE is set to open in July and will mark the brand's city debut. The luxury retailer will offer exclusive sneaker and streetwear collections from renowned sportswear brands such as Nike, adidas, Supreme and Off-White.

Alicia Thompson, CEO of Kick Game, commented, "Liverpool is increasingly becoming an urban hub for streetwear fashion and hype sneakers, which made it a key location for us to extend the reach of our brand. We are hugely excited to be moving onto South John Street at Liverpool ONE, and look forward to opening our doors in a few months time, introducing our exclusive selection of luxury sneakers and streetwear to a new Liverpool audience."



LANDSEC, PART OF THE ST DAVID'S PARTNERSHIP, OWNERS OF ST DAVID'S IN CARDIFF, HAS TODAY ANNOUNCED THAT WELSH BAR GIN NE SAIS QUOI HAS SIGNED TO JOIN THE DESTINATION THIS SUMMER. THE SPECIALIST GIN AND COCKTAIL VENUE WILL TAKE A 6,800SQ FT SPACE, SPLIT OVER TWO FLOORS. SET TO OPEN IN AUGUST, THE NEW ST DAVID'S BAR IS A SECOND LOCATION FOR THE SOUTH WALES NATIVE BRAND. THE BAR WILL TAKE A PROMINENT SITE, FORMING THE GATEWAY TO THE DESTINATION FROM CARDIFF CENTRAL STATION, ADJACENT TO WAGAMAMA ON MILL LANE. GIN NE SAIS QUOI OFFERS GUESTS THE CHOICE OF OVER 80 GIN BRANDS ALONG WITH LIVE MUSIC PERFORMANCES.

H&M OPENS DOORS TO NEW BRAEHEAD STORE

Braehead, one of the UK's most popular retail and leisure destinations, owned by property company SGS and asset managed by Global Mutual Properties, is pleased to announce that H&M opened the doors to its new store at the centre last month.

H&M has re-located from its former unit to a new ground floor space, spanning 17,000sq ft, on a 10-year lease. Visitors to the store will enjoy a new, bespoke interior, with an emphasis on creating a warmer and more relaxed environment.

The upgraded store comes as the retailer steps up investment in both its physical and digital stores, with a renewed focus on the integrated customer experience, as well as sustainability.

To celebrate the opening, H&M will collaborate with Glasgow-based talent and businesses over the coming months, for a series of in-store events and projects. With sustainability at its core, the new store will also offer H&M's Garment Collection and Recycling service. This allows customers to donate any unwanted clothes and textile, by any brand, whilst shopping in-store.

TRIO OF NEW ARRIVALS LAND AT CRIBBS

Cribbs Causeway has begun the year with three new lettings, signing footwear and accessories favourite, Kurt Geiger, and sister brand Carvela, as well as Slim Chickens to units in The Mall.

Originating in London, Kurt Geiger values itself on being inclusive, and encouraging people to be confident and 'truly themselves'. It has been designing for over 50 years, creating handbag and shoe styles for men and women. Kurt Geiger opened its 2,379sq ft store on the lower level next to JD in March.

Meanwhile, Carvela will occupy a 1,622sq ft unit, near to the centre of the Mall, by June 2022, offering a range of styles and accessories, including trainers, heels and ankle boots along with bags, phone cases and sunglasses.

Slim Chickens, which originated in Arkansas, USA, in the noughties, started a UK roll out in 2018. It specialises in fresh chicken cooked to order, with homemade sauces and salads and will sit amongst a suite of family dining peers at the heart of The Mall when it opens this month.

MEZCALITO EXPORTS ITS WINNING COMBO NORTH OF THE BORDER

Mezcalito opened in Chelsea back in 2018 with one aim: to become London's go-to Mexican restaurant. Four years later, it has done just that, thanks to its winning combination of tequila, tacos and downright good fun. Now it's taking the next step with the launch of an equally irresistible sibling, this time in the heart of Islington.

Opening on 1 June, and once more showcasing the best that Mexican hospitality has to offer, Mezcalito Islington replicates the charm and vibrancy of the original, as well as transporting its guests to exotic, sun-kissed climates.

Onto the main event and Mezcalito offers a superb line-up of classic tortillas and quesadillas, both of which come with an array of irresistible fillings.



RITUALS COSMETICS OPENS AT TOUCHWOOD SOLIHULL

Touchwood shopping centre in Solihull has further strengthened its retail offering with the arrival of Rituals Cosmetics.

The premium Dutch cosmetics brand has taken 2,000sq ft on a new five-year lease, with the new store launching after a high-quality fit-out. Rituals offers an extensive collection of luxurious yet affordable home and body products turning everyday routines into meaningful rituals. From foaming shower gels to scented candles, Rituals helps to elevate at-home moments with its selection of award-winning scents.

Rituals will complement and bring further diversity to the offer at Touchwood, in line with the strategy put in place by owner The Ardent Companies UK ("Ardent UK") and appointed asset manager Sovereign Centros. Other notable additions to the tenant roster

already this year include electric car manufacturer Polestar and luxury watch brand Tag Heuer, with other major retailers including John Lewis, Zara, Next and River Island.

Ardent UK acquired Touchwood in July 2021, the first major shopping centre acquisition since the onset of the pandemic, since then the centre's performance has continuously improved, with occupancy hitting 95 per cent.

Andrew Hilston, Managing Director at Ardent, commented: "Rituals is a fantastic addition to Touchwood, further enhancing the diversity and reach of what the centre has to offer its customers. As Solihull gears up to play a major hosting role in the 2022 Commonwealth Games, these are exciting times for both Touchwood and the wider community."

SCREF COMPLETES LETTINGS

Schroders Capital UK Real Estate Fund (SCREF) has announced that it has completed 121,000sq ft of new lettings across its portfolio of retail warehousing assets in the East of England - with deals signed in Essex, Kent, East London and Norfolk. All the deals were signed on 10- or 15-year terms.

NEW LOOK TO ADD A STORE

High street store New Look is to open a new 5,244sq ft store in Barnsley when it launches at The Glass Works in July. Barnsley's newest development in the town centre was unveiled in September 2021 as an exciting new location for retail, leisure, learning and food and drink.

SEVEN DIALS EVOLVES OFFER

Shaftesbury has announced the opening of four new culinary operators in the Seven Dials community. Danish bakery Ole & Steen, French restaurant The Patate, new dining concept St Martin's House and boutique gelateria ANITA have joined the destination.

M&S TO LAUNCH AT LAKESIDE

Lakeside, one of the UK's most popular retail and leisure destinations, owned by property company SGSM is pleased to announce that M&S has signed to open a new store at the centre, due to launch in spring 2023. The move comes as M&S continues its store estate transformation.

ARC CINEMA AGREES A LEASE

Animate, Preston's city owned £40M cinema and leisure complex, which is being delivered by Maple Grove Developments, has announced The Arc Cinema as the scheme's second anchor tenant for a new eight-screen cinema. The Arc Cinema has taken 29,500sq ft offering a total of eight screens.



NEINVER HAS BEGUN THE CONTINUATION OF CONSTRUCTION ON ALPES THE STYLE OUTLETS

NEINVER has resumed construction works at Alpes The Style Outlets, which once completed will mark the company's 17th outlet centre across six European countries. Alpes The Style Outlets boasts an exceptional location near the Swiss border, close to Geneva and next to key tourist destinations. It will feature 20,400sq m of GLA, over 90 boutiques and restaurants.

"France is a strategic market for NEINVER. Our aim is to develop and operate this centre with the local community firmly involved, providing it with an exciting leisure option, while also contributing to improving the region's economic and social development," commented Daniel Losantos, NEINVER Chief Executive Officer. "Outlet centres have shown continued resilience, and this development is a clear vote of confidence in the sector and in the opportunity the site offers to brands to further grow their business."



UNIBAIL-RODAMCO-WESTFIELD (URW) HAS UNVEILED PLANS TO REBRAND THREE FLAGSHIP CENTRES, ROLLING OUT THE WESTFIELD BRAND TO PARQUESUR IN MADRID, TABY CENTRUM IN STOCKHOLM, AND GALERIA MOKOTOW IN WARSAW THIS FALL. THE REBRANDING CONTINUES THE EXPANSION OF THE WESTFIELD BRAND IN EUROPE AS THE COMPANY DRIVES NEW REVENUES THROUGH MEDIA ADVERTISING AND BRAND EXPERIENCES, TURNING ITS HUGE FOOTFALL OF 550 MILLION VISITS ACROSS ITS EUROPEAN ASSETS INTO A QUALIFIED AUDIENCE, WHILST ALSO LEVERAGING THE WESTFIELD BRAND'S SIGNIFICANT VALUE TO RETAILERS.

TENANT MIX GROWS AT SERBIAN CENTRE

The new Ginger Beauty Salon is located on the first floor of the mall consisting of 57sq m. The salon offers dermatological and non-invasive esthetic treatments for people aiming to achieve a youthful, natural and fresh appearance.

The new salon is a great addition to Stadion Shopping Center's health and beauty services offer. The mall also offers a hair salon Dramatics, nail salon CityNails, a salon for solar tanning Morena, and a 500 sqm fitness center Health Care. Stadion is also known as the first shopping center in Belgrade to include a medical centre called Stadion Medica.

Stadion Shopping Center has been operating since 2013 and is located in Belgrade's highly populated residential area Voždovac. The mall represents a €50M investment and was the first modern shopping center to be developed in the old part of Belgrade. Spreading over 75,000sq m, the mall offers two underground garages with 984 parking spaces and a football stadium on its roof.

RALPH LAUREN TO OPEN POP-UP STORE

On the occasion of his new photo book "Ralph Lauren 's Polo Shirt", Ralph Lauren is dedicating a concept store in Berlin-Mitte to the classic item of clothing.

Until 9 July, visitors to Schöenhauser Straße 8 can discover the widest range of Ralph Lauren polo shirts of all time, have their own clothing items personalised and linger in Ralph's Coffee.

The polo shirt concept store in Berlin aims to offer a new, experience-oriented retail concept that focuses entirely on the classic item of clothing.

Using storytelling, immersive technology and augmented reality, the US brand is bringing the history of the polo shirt to life for the first time.

The concept store includes a "Create Your Own" shop that allows for customisation with embroidery, patches and more. In addition, the store offers a limited number of select vintage and collectible designs.

NEW AIRPORT SHOP UNVEILED AT MUNICH'S AIRPORT TERMINAL 2

After the lifting of many pandemic-related travel restrictions, the terminals at Munich Airport are filling up again. Now, passengers in Terminal 2 can enjoy another opportunity to shop before their flight at the new 130sq m "MyCorner M" shop on the non-Schengen level 05 behind passport and security control section.

MyCorner is managed by eurotrade, Munich Airport's own retail subsidiary. "MyCorner M" is eurotrade's own brand and closely aligned with the Munich Airport brand. The new site is the second store to open under this name, following the strategy of offering in the future all newspapers and magazines, travel necessities, souvenirs, tobacco products, beverages and snacks under this new trademark.



HINES SECURES FIRST NIKE STORE IN DENMARK

Hines, the global real estate firm, has secured Nike at 'The Trinity Quarter' in Copenhagen, marking the world-renowned brand's first new store opening in Denmark.

Nike plans to occupy 725sq m of space at 'The Trinity Quarter' located on Købmagergade 44A, one of Copenhagen's busiest pedestrian shopping streets and is set to welcome customers from September 2022. 'The Trinity Quarter' is a landmark hotel and major retail refurbishment in the heart of Copenhagen, which Hines is currently redeveloping following its acquisition of the buildings, in 2018, on behalf of the Hines European Value Fund (HEVF).

From the outset, Hines' strategy has been to create a precinct defining mixed-use asset showcasing its placemaking skills anchored by major retail brands and an outstanding food and beverage offering, creating a new central

destination for the residents of the city of Copenhagen.

The historic buildings on Copenhagen's Købmagergade have been transformed into a mixed-use development including retail and a 243-room hotel operated by 25hours Hotels which has recently opened. 'The Trinity Quarter' is a newly developed site for shopping and relaxation at the northern end of Købmagergade which has seen the area's historic buildings restored and their heritage features enhanced.

James Robson, Senior Managing Director and Country Head for Hines in The Nordics, said: "We are truly delighted that Nike has chosen 'The Trinity Quarter' in the heart of Copenhagen as its first retail outlet in Denmark, and its first physical store opening since the global pandemic took hold. "We look forward to Nike moving in later in the year."

CONCEPT STORE LAUNCHES

Hugo Boss has opened its brand new store concept of BOSS in Rome at Piazza San Lorenzo in Lucina. The new store reflects the most recent retail design concept of the brand and features the complete range of products of the brand for both men and women, including apparel, leatherwear and accessories.

TIFFANY UNVEILS A POP-UP

Situated in Paris, Tiffany & Co has unveiled an experiential year-long store amid its global repositioning under LVMH. The pop-up on 34 Avenue Montaigne, Paris's luxury thoroughfare, located next to the new Dior flagship will be open until May 2023 and will change items several times throughout the year.

VIA OUTLETS SET TO INVEST

VIA Outlets is investing €17.5M in the expansion of its premium shopping site in Seville. The expansion of the Sevilla Fashion Outlet will create 17 new units, adding around 20 per cent in gross leasable area to the shopping destination. Work is due to complete in Q4 2023.

ALTERMUNDI READY TO GROW

Expanding in the last several years, growing its network of Parisian stores, Altermundi is taking a new step by setting up its first point of sale outside Ile-de-France. The multi-brand retailer is beginning this conquest in the city of Bordeaux. The brand has set its sights on a retail space located in the city centre.

S. OLIVER OPENS A FLAGSHIP

S. Oliver has opened its new flagship store in Frankfurt. The store with a prime location on the Zeil shopping mile has 419sq m of retail space. The brand also wants to follow up on the opening on Neuhauser Strasse in Munich last year. The shopfitting concept combines digitisation and inspiration.



americas

WILSON SPORTING GOODS IS EXPANDING ITS FLEDGLING PHYSICAL STORE FOOTPRINT

The sports equipment giant opened its third store to date, and a second location in New York City, on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. A third Big Apple outpost, in Columbus Circle, is set to open this month, as well as pop-ups in key locations throughout the summer months.

Following in the steps of Wilson's SoHo flagship, which opened in January, the uptown store is focused on the brand's longtime and ongoing commitment to sport. The 6,000sq ft, two-level space boasts a multi-use court on the lower level where visitors can test out the brand's latest equipment, apparel and accessories. In-store services such as a full-time racket stringing, ball glove personalization and club fittings are also available.

The location also features Wilson's first-ever "Equipment Room," where shoppers rent select products to play/test before purchasing. The program applies to sporting goods needs across baseball, softball, tennis, pickleball, basketball, football, volleyball and more.



WARBY PARKER ON TRACK TO OPEN 40 STORES THIS YEAR AS THE BRAND CONTINUES TO EXPAND ITS BRICK-AND-MORTAR PRESENCE. THE DIGITALLY NATIVE EYEWEAR RETAILER OPENED EIGHT NEW STORES, BRINGING ITS STORE COUNT TO 169 LOCATIONS. THE OPENINGS INCLUDED WARBY'S FIRST STORE IN NEBRASKA, AND ADDITIONAL SITES IN HOUSTON AND TAMPA, WHERE IT OPENED ITS SIXTH AND THIRD STORES RESPECTIVELY. "WE REMAIN ON TRACK TO EXPAND OUR RETAIL FOOTPRINT BY 40 NEW STORES THIS YEAR, ENDING 2022 WITH 201 STORES," CO-FOUNDER AND CO-CEO DAVE GILBOA SAID ON THE COMPANY'S EARNINGS CALL.

NEW STRANGER THINGS ATTRACTION UNVEILED

New York is home to a new Stranger Things experience at the Duggal Greenhouse in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, opened to celebrate the release of Stranger Things season 4.

Stranger Things: The Experience is an interactive attraction that takes guests to the Upside Down. It features immersive sets and special effects, a new storyline, special merchandise, photo opportunities, and F&B.

The Duggal Greenhouse has been transformed into iconic locations in Hawkins, with guests invited to take part in a new study at Hawkins Lab before meeting the Demogorgon.

After this, visitors enter an area called the Mix-Tape, which is a recreation of the show's Starcourt Mall. Here, visitors can enjoy an ice cream from Scoops Ahoy or a slice of pizza at Surfer Boy Pizza. The Mix-Tape is also home to the Palace Arcade.

Stranger Things: The Experience covers an area of 35,000sq ft and it was co-produced by Netflix and Fever.

IFLY COMES TO THE BIG APPLE

The indoor skydiving experience will be the anchor attraction at the new 10-04 Borden Avenue development. iFLY, a world leader in indoor skydiving tunnels, will be opening its first New York City attraction with a new installation coming to a site by the entrance to the Midtown Tunnel at 10-04 Borden Avenue in Long Island City.

The company has now signed a lease for a state-of-the-art facility, covering 6,800sq ft of retail space between the first and second floors of 10-04 Borden Avenue, a larger commercial development project, where it will be an anchor attraction.

Borden Ave Op Zone, a joint venture between New York-based developer The VOREA Group and Andru Coren, is bringing 10-04 Borden Avenue to life. The project will transform an old commuter car park into a flexible mixed-use space, covering 50,000sq ft, with three storeys and over 6,000sq ft of outdoor space.

news

UNIVERSAL ORLANDO LAUNCHES NEW POP-UP SHOP

Now open at Universal Studios Florida, the new Summer Tribute Store puts guests in a 1980s-style cinema.

Universal Orlando Resort has launched the latest edition of its Summer Tribute Store, celebrating Universal Pictures and Amblin Entertainment's E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial, Jaws and Back to the Future.

Visitors can step inside Elliott's bedroom in the E.T.-themed room, with guests able to buy toys, games and apparel, including the famous red hoodie. Also on offer are plush toys and pins that celebrate the upcoming 40th anniversary of the film's release.

Inspired by Quint's shack, the Jaws-themed room is decorated with seaside props and includes a variety of t-shirts, bags and tumblers based on the classic film.



FIRST IKEA CITY STORE IN CANADA OPENS ITS DOORS IN TORONTO

Ingka Group, the largest IKEA retailer, has opened the first IKEA city store in Canada, as part of its omni-channel commitment to get closer to its customers – whenever and wherever they want to meet IKEA.

The new city store marks a milestone for IKEA in Canada and is another step in the retailer's plans to become even more convenient and accessible to customers.

Ingka Group's ongoing investments in Canada include a new distribution centre in Beauharnois, new planning studios (known as IKEA Plan and order points in Canada) and new pick-up points – as well as the redevelopment of the IKEA Ottawa store to ship customer orders directly from the store.

"Canada is a great example of our transformation as an omni-channel retailer. Our stores in Winnipeg and Halifax already

ship online orders within those markets. Our Ottawa store is being rebuilt as we speak and will be testing new fulfillment systems moving forward. In smaller city stores like IKEA Toronto Downtown, customers can instead pick up their online orders and larger items – or choose to order with home delivery or to another pick-up point closer to their home," says Tolga Öncü, Retail Operations Manager, Ingka Group.

"Globally, around a third of our sales are online – and our physical stores play an important role in this omnichannel reality. As customer behaviours evolve, so do we as a retailer. We are redeveloping many of our larger stores to also ship customer orders in a quicker, more affordable and more sustainable way," the Retail Operations Manager continued.

inbrief

FASHIONPHILE ADDS A SITE

The company is promising the world's largest collection of Hermès Birkin bags at its new location in Manhattan's West Chelsea neighbourhood. The new 60,000sq ft authentication centre and showroom is designed as a destination where consumers can shop, sell and witness the inner workings of a resale company.

MULBERRY LAUNCHES IN NYC

While some retailers are touting a resurgence in in-store shopping, Mulberry has been quietly welcoming consumers to its new Wooster Street store in Manhattan. The brand closed its prior SoHo flagship on Spring Street on the same day it unveiled its new location.

CATERING FOR NEW NORMAL

As workers return to the office and get-together increase, Subway is offering a redesigned catering program. In addition to a continued ability to place customised orders, customers can now streamline the ordering process with pre-selected platters and lunch box options.

PUTTSHACK SET TO EXPAND

The company will launch its second location in Texas in Dallas next year. Puttshack Dallas will feature four tech-driven mini-golf courses, powered by the company's patented Trackball technology. The second location will open its doors to golf enthusiasts in summer 2023.

KOHL'S SETS OUT A NEW PLAN

The department store retailer is increasing its investment in brick-and-mortar through new store openings, remodels, enhanced omni-channel capabilities and the ongoing rollout of in-store Sephora shops. The plans also include the opening of about 100 smaller-format stores in the next four years.



middle east

ROSHN ANNOUNCES ITS FIRST INTEGRATED COMMUNITY IN JEDDAH, SAUDI ARABIA

ROSHN, Saudi Arabia's national real estate developer, a fully owned company by the Public Investment Fund (PIF) and Chaired by His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, announced the Al-Arous community during the Al-Hilal and Al-Ittihad match in Prince Mohammed bin Salman Cup Professional League.

The Al-Arous community will extend over approximately four million square meters, and includes more than 18,000 different residential units to suit all segments of society. Al-Arous is ROSHN's second community, and part of a larger strategy of developing modern and vibrant neighbourhoods in four regions and nine cities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The community will include parks, pedestrian walkways, bicycle paths, restaurants, cafes, schools and mosques, all of which will be developed to the highest standards like the other ROSHN communities.



MIRAL HAS CONFIRMED THAT SEAWORLD ABU DHABI AND THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM ABU DHABI ARE ON TRACK TO COMPLETE IN 2022 AND 2025, RESPECTIVELY. DURING THIS YEAR'S ARABIAN TRAVEL MARKET (ATM), MIRAL REVEALED THAT IT HAS INVESTED OVER AED9BN IN DEVELOPING WORLD-CLASS ATTRACTIONS AND EXPERIENCES ON YAS ISLAND. SEAWORLD ABU DHABI IS SET FOR COMPLETION THIS YEAR AND IT WILL COVER AN AREA OF 183,000SQ M ON YAS ISLAND. MEANWHILE MIRAL HAS PARTNERED WITH DCT ABU DHABI TO DEVELOP THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM ABU DHABI ON SAADIYAT ISLAND.

DAMAC GROUP BUYS DE GRISOGONO SA

Billionaire Hussain Sajwani's Damac Group has purchased De Grisogono SA, a Swiss luxury jeweller that filed for bankruptcy early 2020, as part of the Dubai firm's expansion into high-end fashion.

Alongside the deal, Damac said it launched a property project called Safa One de Grisogono in Dubai, featuring cascading waterfalls, hanging gardens and a manmade beach on the podium level.

"Keeping in line with our ambitions to expand our business into the luxury and high-end fashion realm, bidding for de Grisogono came to us naturally," Sajwani said in a statement on Tuesday. It didn't provide financial details for the De Grisogono transaction.

The acquisition comes three years after the billionaire bought Italian fashion group Roberto Cavalli SpA through his private investment firm.

Earlier this month, Damac said it won a \$120M bid to acquire land in the upscale Miami neighbourhood of Surfside, where it plans to build a Cavalli-branded condominium project.

NOZOMI OPENS DOORS IN AL KHOBAR

Japanese restaurant NOZOMI is a new arrival to the Kingdom's burgeoning hospitality scene, opening its doors in Al Khobar. The London-born restaurant is located within the Al Matal Complex, across from Al Khobar's futuristic waterfront, offering a social dining experience.

Founded in Knightsbridge, London, by restaurateur Marios George in 2004, and owned by Cavadore Group, NOZOMI has since grown into a culinary institution with a global reputation.

The restaurant's latest location has been brought to the Kingdom by Cavadore Group, in partnership with Al Moajil Hospitality, operated and owned by Chairman Mohammed Saad Al Moajil and led by CEO Abdulaziz Al Moajil, bringing in a new era of fine dining into the Kingdom. The brand's Al Khobar outlet offers a location-specific à la carte menu that adapts Japanese cuisine to local Saudi tastes. Dishes include the black cod, Canadian lobster and wagyu beef.

news

UAE HOME-GROWN BARBERSHOP EXPANDING ACROSS THE REGION

Chaps & Co, has picked upmarket outlets for expansion such as Bloomingdales at Dubai Mall along with Saudi Arabia.

The gentlemen's barbershop was founded in 2015 and now has a total of 10 operations barbershops across the MENA region along with the US. The company is looking to open another four branches by the end of the year.

While its expansion plans were derailed by the Covid-19 pandemic, it has bounced and launched a flagship branch in Riyadh.

Founder of Chaps & Co, Jordan Davies, commented: "The pandemic taught us valuable business lessons and provided time to strategise the next few years. We're incredibly proud to now be in a position of international expansion."



HERMÈS UNVEILS NOW STORE IN DOHA WITH A DISTINCT DESIGN

Hermès is thrilled to announce the opening of the new Doha store, which is located in the Qatari capital's new shopping destination, Place Vendôme.

Set between desert and sea, the spacious new store of over 600sq m draws upon the region's unique topography and historical landmarks, offering a vivid exploration of noble materials and craftsmanship in a contemporary expression of the Hermès architectural vocabulary.

In a vast and majestic surrounding, the store promises a singular experience to discover the sixteen métiers of the house. The store, designed by the Parisian architecture agency RDAI, benefits from an abundance of natural light flowing through double-height windows lining the exterior walls.

The luminosity and airiness are enhanced

by the lustre of marble and stone in cream and white, punctuated with shades of amber and earthy tones.

Unique textured details reveal the gesture of the artisan's hand and further highlight the singularity of this new address. Sculptural undulating lines on the ceiling evoke the sand dunes in the nearby inland sea of Khor Al Udaid.

Each space is delineated by unique hand-laid inserts in the terrazzo – inspired by the rock carvings of Al Jassasiya – either marble, mother of pearl, or pearlescent seashells of various scales.

The new Hermès Doha store invites visitors to a discovery of its sixteen métiers and to enjoy a welcoming and contemporary environment binding the cultural essence of Doha with the Parisian house's creativity and fine craftsmanship.

inbrief

SACOOR BLUE LAUNCH STORE

Sacoor Blue, a brand-new lifestyle concept created by the Sacoor Group has launched its very first store in Dubai at City Centre Deira. This new concept is inspired by change and a better future, whilst its DNA is one of resonating a relaxed and more conscious approach to life. The new brand is aimed at Gen Z.

MYGOLF TEES OFF IN DUBAI

Dubai's first premium indoor golf and entertainment lounge, located in International City's Dragon Mart 2, is where guests can work on their driving on the virtual range, gain access to state-of-the-art technology to fix your swing or relax with a bite to eat.

ALL-FEMALE STORE UNVEILED

Starbucks KSA has launched its first all-Saudi female operated drive-thru store in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia as part of its ongoing commitment to creating more work opportunities for Saudi women in-line with the Kingdom's 2030 vision.

MUVI CINEMAS ADDS STUDIO

The Saudi home-grown cinema brand is launching Muvi Studios and wants to make world-class original Arabic movies. Saudi Arabia's Muvi Cinemas is launching its own studio to boost home-grown and Egyptian theatrical film production.

COFFEE PLANET TO EXPAND

Coffee Planet is set to open in Saudi Arabia later in 2022. The Dubai-based roastery is currently the largest specialty coffee roaster in the Middle East and is open in 20 countries across the GCC, Asia and Europe. The company is recognised for its 100 per cent Arabica specialty coffee that is ethically sourced.



THE LUXURY FRENCH BRAND BACCARAT HAS OPENED ITS FIRST STORE IN VIETNAM

French crystal house Baccarat has opened its first store in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

Baccarat is a handcrafted crystal manufacturer that was established in 1764 in eastern France under the patronage of King Louis XV. It has since become one of the most significant monuments in the area.

"Vietnamese crystal lovers can accentuate their living space with novelty furniture from the latest crystal collections from Baccarat," said the spokesperson of S&S Group, the official distributor of Baccarat in Vietnam.

S&S Group is a wholly-owned conglomerate with interests in luxury, real estate development, arts and fashion. The group also partners with brands including Lamborghini, Rolls Royce and Bovet.

Baccarat's pieces have been seen in Indian Maharajahs' palaces, Tsar Nicholas II's candelabra, and the Japanese Court's orders. "Baccarat was the first unit in France to produce coloured crystals. Many shades become the trademark of the brand to this day, such as ruby red," the spokesperson added.



TECHNOLOGY GIANT APPLE HAS LAUNCHED ITS FLAGSHIP IN WUHAN, ITS FIRST RETAIL STORE IN CHINA TO FEATURE AN APPLE PICKUP AREA. APPLE WUHAN IS THE 54TH APPLE STORE IN CHINA, AS THE TECH GIANT CONTINUES TO EXPAND ITS FOOTPRINT IN ASIA, ESPECIALLY IN MAINLAND CHINA. THE FLAGSHIP STORE USES GRANITE FLOORS AND WOOD-TRIMMED WALLS TO MAKE THE STORE AND MALL LOBBY BRIGHTER AND MORE TRANSPARENT. THE INSTORE TEAM WILL HELP CUSTOMERS WITH PURCHASING AND PERSONALISING THEIR DEVICES, CHOOSING INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PLANS, USING ELIGIBLE DEVICES AS TRADE-INS ON NEW ONES, AND BOOKING ONLINE SUPPORT.

OWNDAYS LAUNCHES PREMIUM CONCEPT

The Japanese quick fashion eyewear company Owndays announced the launch of their new store in Ngee Ann City's Takashimaya S.C. in Singapore.

This will be the brand's second premium concept shop worldwide, and the 33rd standalone store in Singapore. The new store features an exclusive assortment of made-in-Japan eyeglasses and premium ophthalmic lenses handpicked for its premium concept stores.

The Takashimaya S.C. store reflects the "Japanese Luxury" idea first launched at the company's first premium concept store at Marina Bay Sands, providing a premium eyewear shopping experience topped with Japanese hospitality and a wider product assortment.

The new store offers a distinct Japanese-styled aesthetic that pays homage to the brand's heritage while infusing a touch of luxury, drawing influence from Ryoanji Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a major site in Kyoto, Japan known for its famous rock garden.

A. LANGE & SÖHNE ADDS A THIRD BOUTIQUE

The German watch manufacturer brand A. Lange & Söhne opens a new store in Hong Kong in Harbour City. A. Lange & Söhne has been present in Hong Kong since 1997. By building its third shop in Hong Kong, the German luxury label reinforces its links with the city.

"With our third boutique in Hong Kong, which is the second at Kowloon, we are not only further increasing our commitment to the continuously growing number of watch connoisseurs who take a keen interest in A. Lange & Söhne," said Wilhelm Schmid, Lange CEO. "We are also delighted to offer an elaborately designed setting that reflects the soul of our manufactory and allows you to immerse yourself in the art of Saxon fine watchmaking."

The Experience Library, which allows visitors to immerse themselves in the history of the brand is a particular highlight of the new store. The genuine exhibit objects were chosen with care to highlight the history and distinctive horological experience.

WINGSTOP SIGNS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH KOREA

The American fast-food chain Wingstop announced last month that it has reached an agreement for development rights in South Korea, adding to its robust international expansion pipeline.

The agreement calls for a 60-restaurant commitment over ten years, with the possibility of 200-250 total restaurants around the country, with the first set to open in early 2023.

Korea is a key growth market outlined in Wingstop's strategic roadmap to becoming a Top 10 Global Restaurant Brand. This expansion is in line with the brand's well-established strategy. Wingstop's industry-leading digital business will reach consumers via its advanced tech stack, for both in-restaurant and off-premise events.



NEW TIME OUT MARKET IS SET TO OPEN ITS DOORS IN 2025

Time Out Group plc, the global media and hospitality business, has announced that it has entered into a management agreement with real estate developer Hankyu Hanshin Properties Corporation, to open a new Time Out Market in Osaka.

This is Time Out Market's fifth management agreement and its first location in the region, enabling further global expansion of this successful food and cultural market.

Time Out Market Osaka is expected to open in the Umekita Second Zone development in 2025. The Umekita Project, in the Umeda area of the city, is a large-scale development at the former cargo yard in front of Osaka Station. Once complete, it will establish an urban complex with offices, hotels, commercial

facilities, a municipal park and housing.

Time Out Market Osaka will showcase the city's best food, drinks and culture, and will span over 31,000sq ft, and include 15 of Osaka's best chefs and restaurateurs, and two bars. Under the agreement, Time Out receives a share of revenues and profits (subject to a guaranteed consultancy fee) but does not contribute to the capital cost of the site. Time Out's primary responsibility is branding, curation and day-to-day consultancy advice on operations.

Didier Souillat, Co-CEO of Time Out Market, commented: "We look forward to working with Hankyu Hanshin Properties Corporation to bring the best of Osaka's homegrown cuisine and culture together under one roof."

PUMA LAUNCHES IN MALDIVES

Puma's first store in Republic of Maldives is a two-storey outlet located in Majeedhee Magu in Male. The store is the first step in Puma India's plans to expand into the territory. As well as stores, the brand also plans to expand into e-commerce, sports clubs, and other distribution channels.

LI-NING UNVEILS NING COFFEE

Leading sportswear brand Li-Ning has started its own freshly-brewed coffee business, making it a new contender to the competitive on-premise coffee sector. Most of its coffee business is expected to be included in its brick-and-mortar sportswear stores.

STARBUCKS KOREA EXPANDS

Starbucks Korea has opened its first store in Seoul inside the underground subway Gangnam Station, offering quick service to rush-hour commuters. The only other Starbucks location operating inside an underground station is at Canary Wharf station in London.

JYPSY OPENS IN SINGAPORE

The restaurant Jypsy has opened its doors in One Fullerton, a stunning waterfront-facing location. Obviously boho-chic decor aside, its weathered panels and statement hanging lamps have taken cues from the scenic Japanese archipelago.

HOT POT CHAIN SET TO GROW

Hong Kong-listed hot pot chain, Haidilao, is to launch in the Philippines this month in a joint venture with an unidentified local partner. The company's plans were confirmed by the Department of Trade and Industry and consultation was provided by the Philippine Trade and Investment Center in Hong Kong.

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Inspiring the World

A global company with design and creativity at the centre of its business model, Mango's strategy is based on constant innovation, the search for sustainability and an ecosystem of channels and partners. Here, RLI spends some time with CEO Toni Ruiz to speak about the brand's continuing development across multiple mediums and what its next steps are.



Mango Campus
Barcelona, Spain



One of Europe's leading fashion groups, Mango was founded in Barcelona in 1984 by Isak Andic, the company's non-executive chairman. Whilst the women's line is at the heart of the business and the main driver of sales, they are also present in the men's, kids and home sectors and produce approximately 140 million items per year.

Mango is very clear about its DNA and what differentiates them. With clients as their priority, they offer a unique fashion proposal focused on translating main trends into their own language.

"Our distribution structure, that combines channels, stores (retail and wholesale) and online, helps us to fulfil our customer's needs at any time, place and format," explains Toni Ruiz, CEO of Mango. "This strategy has as main pillars a strong relationship with our local partners and one of the most advanced supply chains in our sector."

Currently operating in 110 markets, the highest of any European brand, the Mango portfolio consists of over 2,500 points of sale as well as their online channel. The goal in the coming years is to accelerate expansion, consolidating their position and presence in core markets such as Spain, France, Italy, Germany and the UK, and to develop their operations in major international markets such as the US and India, where they are currently working with one of their international strategic partners,

Myntra on the completion of ten stores in the first half of the year.

With this development in the US in mind, just last month they unveiled their new, 2,100sq m flagship store at 711 Fifth Avenue in New York, one of the world's most exclusive shopping streets. The new site is located at the Grande Dame building, which was formerly the headquarters of major companies such as NBC, Columbia Pictures and Coca-Cola. The opening of the New York store is the starting point of the expansion plan the company is promoting to consolidate the brand in the country.

Looking ahead, Ruiz explains that we are in an uncertain and unstable time, and because of this, diversification both in terms of product and geographies, plays to their strengths.

"During recent years, we have carried out an important diversification process and right now we are focused on developing our current lines, such as men's, kids, teen and home. All of them have a lot of growth potential, both in our main market, Europe, and in the rest of the world," says Ruiz.

"From an efficiency point of view, our goal now is to keep working towards operational excellence. We are investing more than €130M in key projects such as the expansion of our warehouse in Barcelona and the construction of a Mango Campus that adapts to new ways of working," he continues.

When discussing new products, or new company initiatives, Toni comments that sometimes it is about being brave enough to take steps forward. After launching their online platform in 2000, they have since become one of the leading fashion groups in terms of business in the online sector. More recently, they are entering the metaverse by focusing on their DNA and relating it to the world of art and culture, and creating new relationships with artists and other stakeholders. Much like Covid did, the metaverse is growing in importance so quickly that it has created a sense of urgency within companies and organisations to act now, and this is certainly the case at Mango as they look to grow on this platform.

The topic of sustainability is today more prevalent than ever, and Mango believes in sustainable growth across three pillars: economics, environment and social.

"We see sustainability as a journey, one that the fashion industry must make in order to contribute to a fairer society, and to reduce its environmental and social impact on the world. We organise our journey towards sustainability in three key concepts that reflect the company values: Committed to the Planet, Committed to the Community and Committed to the Value Chain."

Founded in one of the historical enclaves of the European textile industry, the company wants to inspire the world by sharing its passion for Mediterranean

style and culture. They are a business that is committed to its influence area and to the sector in which they operate, continuously adapting to changes with an ethical and responsible approach to society and the environment.

Mango is a brand that cares about its people, clients and partners and is committed to helping to create a better world while using its entrepreneurial mind-set to never stop learning and exploring. They remain authentic to their Mediterranean spirit and are culturally curious, meaning they believe that art and culture make the world a more inspiring place and that beauty, style and attention to detail is in their DNA.

As our time with Ruiz comes to a close, we ask what lies ahead and what is Mango's greatest challenge?

"Fashion as an industry needs to continue down this sustainability path and for us sustainability is one of our strategic pillars. Another challenge is to continue to understand the necessities of our clients and try to anticipate changes in habits, this is why we are investing money and time in mediums such as the metaverse," explains Ruiz.

"Finally new ways of working remains a challenge. The pandemic situation has changed the way we interact with our teams and colleagues, but we see this as an opportunity. With the new Mango Campus we aim to be able to improve our efficiency and creativity but at the same time incorporate new work habits," Ruiz concludes.





Go Beyond Sustainable Retail

North Sails was founded in 1957 by Lowell North, a world-class engineer and an Olympic gold medallist whose vision was to create the best sails for sailing in the world. Today, 65 years later this ideal is still front and centre for a company that continues to evolve and innovate. Here, RLI speaks with Marisa Selfa, CEO of North Sails Apparel to learn more about this ocean-positive brand.

The inspiration of Lowell North lives on within North Sails Apparel, which since its inception in 1987 has been designing and developing products so that consumers can focus on what's important – whether that is taking on the sea or just navigating modern life. The continuing vision for the business is to be the first ocean-positive apparel company, meaning that the ocean is their playground and the place where they want to focus all of their efforts because the ocean is so relevant for the rest of the planet, health and people.

"We currently operate 24 stores, with the vast majority of these situated across Italy. Our main flagship is situated in Milan, with another key site in Genoa which is well known as a fantastic place for sailing," explains Marisa Selfa, CEO of North Sails Apparel. "Outside of Italy, we have stores in Saint-Tropez, France and Palma de Majorca and Barcelona in Spain with our own stores and we also have franchised stores in Italy

with our partners. We are now looking to expand and this is one of my main priorities, to make the brand more international because we are well known in Italy due to the history of the brand, but we are not so well known outside of the country."

Their store in Saint-Tropez is one that has been there for many years, but last year an opportunity presented itself for an additional pop-up store in the harbour, which worked fantastically well due to its exceptional location. The timing could not have been better, because their current store is slated to become the tourist office of Saint-Tropez. So what they are doing is building a new and bigger store at 200sq m on the site where the pop-up was, and this will become the home of the North Sails group and be ready for customers next year.

Speaking about the development pipeline for the coming months, Selfa explains that there are different pillars of their operation, with a

key one being sustainability. Their current collection is made up of 95 per cent sustainable materials, a huge increase from Selfa's arrival at the end of the spring summer 21 collection was made up from 30 per cent of sustainable materials.

The second pillar is the internationalisation of the business Selfa touched on earlier. "Right now around half of our business is done in Italy. Our best markets outside of our home country are Spain, France and Germany and in total we have 1,300 points of sale including multi-brands, department stores and our own stores."

Selfa goes on to say that whilst Europe can still grow, the UK market is a market in which they are not very present and want this to change moving forward.

"We are now also having some good conversations in areas like the Middle East and the US, and places such as Australia and New Zealand are obvious places for us to go to in the future. However, whilst we are looking to grow, we want to grow responsibly and sustainably and not rush it, we want to grow organically," Selfa highlights.

While Covid is by no means gone, the retail world is returning to something resembling pre-lockdowns around the world. As things are now opening up, the brand is once again in a position to engage with customers in additional ways to help build loyalty and ensure repeat visits. They have launched the 'Adopt a Coral' initiative, meaning whenever a customer purchases something from North Sails, the company will plant a new coral. They are also looking to host mini-events in some of their flagships, for example they have invited the Founder of Coral Gardeners Titouan Bernicot to come to their Milan flagship to give a speech on what is happening in the oceans.

"We want to begin incorporating these little events because we want

to invite people to come and get really aligned with the philosophy and values of the company, brand and connectivity," says Selfa.

Moving forward, social media is an area where North Sails is looking to grow and in the last year they have pushed in this area and want to expand more in the future. Previously they had not had a team focused on this aspect of marketing but this has now changed, and social media presents the brand with an opportunity to talk about multiple facets through their channels, such as water sports, ocean conservation, sustainability and fashion.

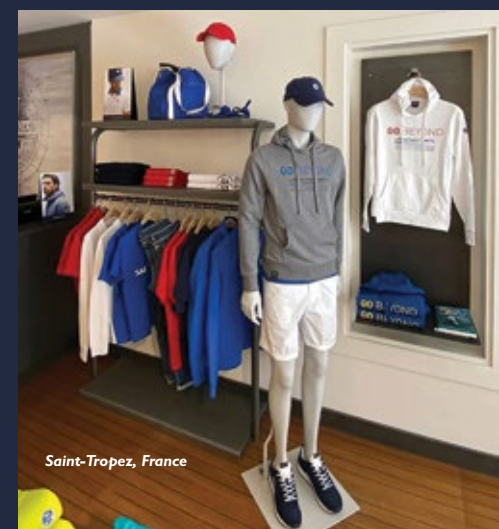
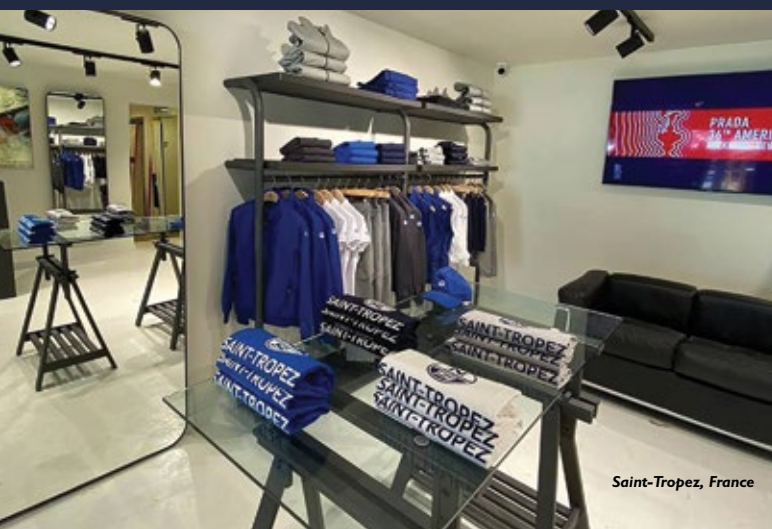
When discussing sustainability, Selfa highlights that their philosophy is that they look for progress not perfection. They now produce items with less water usage, they have cut out the use of toxic dyes and they have reviewed the code of conduct with suppliers. So while perfection is impossible right now, they are making great strides in the area of sustainability.

The brand has seen considerable success over the years, and the CEO of the apparel division feels that this can be put down to its Italian consumers that are incredibly loyal to the company and have grown with the business over the years.

As she looks to the future, Marisa feels that the challenges that face North Sails are similar to the rest of the companies in retail, as companies today ask themselves, how do we achieve sustainable growth?

"This is not about the sustainable materials; it is about opening in the right place at the right time with the right partners. The other challenge is omni-channel and finally is continuing to build the right business model for the future," she explains.

"As for me personally, my challenge moving forward is to make sure our team is really motivated and happy to be North Sails as we continue to grow."





Make Your Own Story

With its lean luxury philosophy, Ruby Hotels has a streamlined organisational structure and succeeds in creating a contemporary, affordable form of luxury for modern, cost and style-conscious customers. Here, RLI spends some time with Michael Struck, Founder & CEO of the company to discuss its ongoing expansion plans and sustainability efforts.

Founded in 2013, Ruby Hotels is breaking new ground with its unique ethos. By prioritising certain elements and streamlining their operation, they can offer guests what matters to them most, affordable luxury.

This concept succeeds because they accommodate these unique settings in a relatively condensed space, foregoing unnecessary services. Thanks to proprietary technical innovations, the brand plans, builds and organises itself differently from conventional hotels.

"To be specific, we plan and build in a very modular way, centralising and automating processes behind the scenes wherever possible," explains Michael Struck, Founder & CEO, Ruby Hotels. "This helps us create a luxurious and unique hotel experience at an affordable price."

The business currently operates fourteen hotels across Germany, Switzerland, Austria and the UK, with another scheduled to open in Amsterdam in the coming weeks. Away from their current operating portfolio, nine more sites are contractually secured and under construction, which will add Italy and Ireland to their geographic portfolio.

The company also operates Ruby Workspaces, which are perfectly equipped workplaces that garner a creative atmosphere and offer an inspiring office environment. Two of these are currently operating in Germany, with three more set to open shortly in the Austria and the Netherlands.

Recent hotel launches by Ruby Hotels include their second hotel in Munich, Ruby Rosi, and their first hotel in Geneva, Ruby Claire just a few weeks ago. One more opening meanwhile, Ruby Emma in Amsterdam, is on course to open imminently. Looking ahead they are excited to continue their expansion successfully in Ireland, Scotland and other European countries.

"We already have some exciting projects and also new markets in the pipeline for the next years. This will include cities like Dublin and Florence, but also further openings in London and Frankfurt are planned. In addition, we are of course continuously looking at other markets in Europe. Further afield, back in 2018, we established a joint venture in China together with our partner Delonix, formerly known as the Betterwood Group," explains Struck.

When speaking about what initially attracts Ruby to new properties, the Founder & CEO immediately says location. He goes on to say that for their target group, it is key to be in the gastronomical and nightlife hotspots, those areas of a city where the creative crowd meets. At the same time, they want their guests to be well connected in terms of transport, as well as being within close reach of the central business district (CBD) and key leisure attractions.

Since the beginning, online capabilities have been a major strength of the brand and this year they are planning to relaunch their website in order to offer their customers an even better experience and a more intuitive way of booking.

"We have also expanded our content strategy for more unique stories directly from our destinations, and we launched Ruby TV, our own in-house TV channel, showing exclusive content from Ruby for our guests," Struck highlights.

Sustainability is and has been an integral part of Ruby's philosophy from the start. Energy efficiency is part of their technical expertise, augmented by their space efficiency. Plastic was banned from their properties a long time ago and they make sure to reduce waste by going for large-volume bindings, reusability and recyclability; with a good example of this being their self-created amenity products.

"Even in our buildings and furnishings, our focus is on re-use of the existing, rather than absorbing resources for new manufacture. We source locally, wherever possible, from suppliers who work sustainably; in foods, this means most of our products are organic. There is more, but hopefully this gives you an idea of how importantly we take sustainability," says Struck.

With their lean luxury approach, Ruby Hotels can consistently offer something new and it means the brand offers an experience others in the industry cannot. While it is a competitive concept, Struck highlights that you need smart and passionate people to bring it to life, and the team at Ruby do this with precision and he readily admits the Ruby team is the most important factor behind their success.

"As we look to the future, one challenge for Ruby will be to maintain our strategic discipline, focusing strictly on our niche and remaining true to our lean philosophy. The second one will be finding, and keeping, the right people to execute, by living and promoting Ruby's unique culture," Struck concludes.



Zürich, Switzerland



Cologne, Germany



Frankfurt, Germany



Düsseldorf, Germany



Düsseldorf, Germany



Ventura Mall, DAMAC Hills
Dubai, UAE



Shaping the Future

DAMAC Properties have been moulding the Middle East's luxury real estate market for the past 20 years, delivering iconic residential, commercial and leisure properties across Dubai, the wider region and beyond. Here, RLI speaks with Ali Sajwani, General Manager of the company to discuss its recent developments and future plans.



Positioned at the forefront of the sector since 2002, DAMAC Properties has projects across the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, UK, Canada and USA. Making their mark at the highest end of stylish living, the business has cemented its position as the leading opulent developer in the region. Having delivered over 39,400 units, DAMAC has a development portfolio of 28,000 units at various stages of development.

Last year was a very successful one for the company as they launched their latest new community retail venture, the Ventura Mall in DAMAC Hills. The mall features 36 retail stores, eight food & beverage outlets, a 28,600sq ft supermarket, 19,813sq ft gym, and a 10,008sq ft medical centre.

"The inspiration for this project came from its near-perfect location and its ability to fulfil the existing needs of DAMAC residents in the immediate catchment," explains Ali Sajwani, General Manager of DAMAC Properties. "We have grown to become a strong retail player in the community mall space and we will be launching more projects in the community mall and retail sector."

Away from this project, DAMAC has brought new and exciting living concepts to the market through collaborations that include a golf course by The Trump Organisation, and luxury homes in association with Versace, Cavalli, Just Cavalli, de GRISOGONO, Paramount Hotels & Resorts, Rotana and Radisson Hotel Group. With a consistent vision and strong momentum, DAMAC Properties is building the next generation of Middle Eastern luxury living.

Over the past six months, the company has launched DAMAC Lagoons, which will feature elegant villas and townhouses that will be surrounded by azure blue lagoons as well as Cavalli Tower and Safa One de GRISOGONO in Dubai. In addition, DAMAC Tower Nine Elms London is set to be delivered with an exclusive partnership with Versace Home, bringing visitors the ultimate in branded living experiences.

Outside of the Middle East, their expansion into the US marks a major milestone, demonstrating that the business is a force to be reckoned with on a global scale.

"We are in an exciting time at the moment and we have a lot on the horizon. We are rapidly growing, not only in our real estate endeavours but in various sectors such as fashion, hospitality and even emerging industries such as the Metaverse, NFTs and data centres, enabling us to stay ahead of the curve," explains Sajwani.

As a leading developer, DAMAC Properties builds communities and provides bespoke experiences based on the tenant mix and the requirements of the community. They believe connectivity and accessibility are the most important factors in building communities because these malls are all about convenience and DAMAC builds its communities ensuring that they are well-connected and accessible.

Sajwani feels that social media platforms shape the business strategies of some of the world's biggest businesses, and they have dedicated teams that work hard to best leverage these tools, engage with new customers from all parts of the world and turn digital footfall and 'mentions' into sales figures.

"Needless to say, we are no exception to this. We are present across all leading social media channels with around one million followers on Facebook. We use an omni-channel approach to create and raise brand awareness, generate enquires, increase revenue and strengthen the ROI."

DAMAC Properties has always been at the forefront of technical innovation, and this has continued with their recent launch into the Metaverse. This move into cryptocurrencies and virtual worlds is one of DAMAC's high-priority initiatives to allow them to accelerate into this new economic platform for newer generations and the future of the industry.

"Global businesses like ours must stay at the top of evolving trends and offering yet another transactional mode is exciting and we are glad to recognise the value this technology brings to our customers," Sajwani adds.

Partnerships and relationships are of paramount importance to DAMAC, and to ensure these important collaborations remain on track, the company has a team of people who are regularly interacting with tenants to understand if they need any help or support, while their easy-

to-use payment methods for their bills and rent ensure hassle-free living. Their team is constantly improving together, while ensuring they meet with them every quarter.

Over the past two decades DAMAC Properties has enjoyed some fantastic success, and Sajwani feels the key drivers behind this is having a people-oriented business model and being agile to changing market circumstances. Through their brand associations with companies such as Paramount Hotels & Resorts, Cavalli, Versace and Fendi, they will continue to meet market demands for familiar touchpoints whilst at the same time offering guests distinctive experiences.

"The real estate market in Dubai is currently witnessing aggressive growth. With this, there may occur challenges such as an imbalance between supply and demand. At DAMAC, we believe in being prudent and taking informed and proactive measures such as limiting new launches and focusing on delivering existing projects. We remain committed to addressing the needs of a vibrant and ever-evolving market with substantial products suiting our customer needs and desires, and will continue to do so," Sajwani concludes.

www.damacproperties.com



DAMAC Hills 2
Dubai, UAE



Safa One de GRISOGONO
Dubai, UAE



DAMAC Tower Nine Elms
London, UK



Born to Win

GMG is a global well-being company retailing, distributing and manufacturing a portfolio of leading international and home-grown brands across the sport, food and health sectors. Here, RLI sits down with Mohammad A. Baker, Deputy Chairman and CEO to learn more about this unique company and what their plans are moving forward.

Starting life in 1977 as a single butcher's shop, GMG is today considered one of the Middle East's leading family-owned retail conglomerates with an expanding global presence and 7,000 employees in 12 countries across the Middle East, North Africa and Asia.

The company operates under five main divisions – GMG Sports, GMG Health, GMG Food, GMG Consumer Goods and GMG Ventures. Under its GMG Sports banner, they inspire and empower their community through authentic, high-quality sports gear from the world's leading brands. Through the GMG Food division, they add value to the UAE's economy by producing locally and supplying their customers with fresh and nutritious food. Its Consumer Goods division distributes popular home-grown food brands and oversees the operations of the supermarket Géant in the UAE. GMG Health delivers a holistic approach to supporting consumer's well-being through nutrition, pharmacare, vitamins, supplements and more, and through GMG Ventures the company operates four home-grown brands in education, logistics, outdoor living and real estate.

"Despite our legacy as one of the UAE's oldest family-owned businesses, GMG still operates with a start-up mentality," explains Mohammad A. Baker, Deputy Chairman and CEO. "For example, at the end of 2020, when business sentiment was at its lowest, we took the bold step of acquiring a popular Asia retailer, Royal Sporting House, and expanding into Asia."

Meanwhile in 2021, the company expanded its Nike partnership to Iraq and Egypt, increased their investment in KSA and scaled some of their verticals. As for this year, they announced a partnership with the

international lifestyle brand New Era to become its official distributor across the GCC, Iraq and Egypt and in April, they acquired Nike-only stores from the sports retailing arm of SUTL Corporation in Singapore and Malaysia.

"At GMG, we have introduced more than 120 brands into our markets, including Nike, Columbia, Under Armour, Timberland, Vans, Mama Sita's and McCain amongst many others. We have also conceptualised 13 owned brands and notable ones include Sun & Sand Sports, Dropkick, Supercare Pharmacy, Farm Fresh and Klassic. Currently, we operate over 550 retail outlets in 57 cities," Baker highlights.

Recent openings across their portfolio include the Middle East's first Air Jordan concept store in the Dubai Mall, which was a new concept by Nike, and it included unique artwork commissioned by famed artists such as Syrian-American artist Jason Seife. They also launched M-A-D last year, which recognises the rise of a more environmentally conscious consumer and offers the most innovative, on-trend, eco-conscious sports and streetwear fashion. Finally, they have unveiled a new concept of their popular Sun & Sand Sports brand at the Dubai Mall that caters specifically to Gen Z consumers.

Fundamentally a growth company with long-term global ambitions, GMG's ambition moving forward is reflected by its ongoing journey to expand their portfolio, as well as doubling their global workforce by 2025 across their operational regions.

"We will continue to build on our solid 45-year legacy as a consumer-centric trusted partner for growth and innovation. Our partners are proud to work with us because they know that while our accomplishments speak for themselves, we will never be complacent



Nike Beacon
The Dubai Mall, Dubai, UAE

about them," says Baker. "One of our key values is to keep evolving. We believe we must constantly challenge ourselves to meet the ever-changing consumer demands. To do so, we must be the change we wish to see and inspire our partners and communities to do the same. Along the way, I believe that we will always consider ourselves as a large start-up and come together as one family, digging in together to win no matter how large we become. It follows that we must care passionately about our people and the communities we serve – putting our people and our consumers first."

When discussing the future of retail and customer engagement, Baker highlights that throughout everything in the last couple of years, retailers need to remember that customers today have access to thousands of brands locally and internationally. He goes on to say that building and rewarding customer loyalty must be an intrinsic part of being a retailer, because today they need to earn customers' loyalty and trust every step of the journey. Baker and GMG strongly believe that loyalty goes beyond products and services and that it is about creating a solid emotional connection with customers – one in which they feel seen and heard and one that it is all about hyper-personalisation, which invariably helps contribute to customer loyalty and retention.

The platform of social media is something that simply cannot be ignored by retailers, and GMG believe firmly in harnessing the power this

medium possesses. They have fully embraced social media marketing, whether at a corporate or a brand level. Their astute investment in social media has definitely uplifted their in-store and online sales, helped build relationships with their customers, and supported the brand in keeping it front of mind for existing and new consumers and partners.

Along with social media, GMG recognises the vital need to prioritise sustainability as a responsible corporate company. They hold themselves accountable for their own impact and as such, they are constantly working towards becoming a more sustainable business, from their logistics, operations and partners, to how they can inspire and innovate for their consumers, their community and their environment.

GMG is a business with a 'Born to Win' attitude who are self-starters, constantly challenging the status quo to deliver better products and experiences that change lives every day.

As for the future, Baker sees potential in every market they operate in. "A renewed focus on personal wellbeing is a trend we are witnessing across all geographies globally. Improving people's lives through active living, nutritious food, and good health has no boundaries. From an industry perspective, as I mentioned, we have been operating in the areas of sports, health, food and consumer goods for decades. That is where we are directing our future investments as part of our new corporate strategy," Baker concludes.



Arabella Pharmacy
The Dubai Mall, Dubai, UAE



Géant Hypermarket, Dubai Hills Mall
Dubai, UAE



Tribord Sailing Lab
La Rochelle, France



Made For Everyone

Decathlon is a family-owned company founded in 1976 in Lille, France and it was born out of the idea that the best sports products should be accessible to everyone. In this interview, RLI sits down with Eric Mazillier, CEO of Decathlon UK to learn more about the business and what its future goals are.

At its core, Decathlon is for sports lovers, the team players, the beginners and the fanatics. Regardless of race, religion or creed, the brand was created to support everyone through their sports journey by providing expertly designed kit and equipment at unbeatable value.

Good examples of this include the tennis racket used by Gael Monfis to win the Adelaide tennis tournament, the future Kipsta ball that will be used in the French Ligue 1 by superstars like Lionel Messi and Neymar from next season, and the Van Rysel equipment that will be used during the next Tour de France by the Cofidis team.

“Our members of staff are all sports enthusiasts who have turned their passion into a job. We come from all over the world – a community made up of semi-pros, casual participants and novices,” explains Eric Mazillier, CEO of Decathlon UK. “Our mission is to help more people in the UK get more physically active and healthier through sport.”

Today the company operates 2,080 stores across 56 countries and they have almost 100,000 Decathletes in their employment, it is figures

like these that make the company the largest sports retailer in the world.

Recently the brand has overseen openings across the UK in Cardiff, Kent and Glasgow. These openings were concessions in Tesco superstores, allowing them to reach more customers, creating a more rounded shopping experience for guests, who can do their weekly shop, as well as browse all of Decathlon’s sportswear, all under one roof.

Outside of the UK, they unveiled their latest Decathlon Malaysia site on 14 May, launching a 4,000sq ft space at The Shoppes at Four Seasons Place. This new store sells 12,000 exclusive products, covering more than 60 sports such as cycling, martial arts, racket sports, skating and many more. Ideal for campers, the store is now incorporated with VR tech where customers can experience their best-selling camping tents before purchasing. The site even comes with a vegan-friendly restaurant as Agrain opens its seventh outlet in Malaysia to make eating healthy simple and accessible by oven-baking meals for its customers.

“Looking forward, we have an exciting year ahead with further growth and expansion across the globe. We are opening new stores to help

widen our in-person customer experience and product offering. We will also rapidly increase the speed of which we reduce our impact on the planet with more eco-design products and a real offer based on a circular economy,” Mazillier highlights.

The brand has a clear vision of where they want to be in the future and they are always reinventing themselves and considering new markets based on consumer demand and opportunity.

Utilising materials from more sustainable sources is at the forefront of their product design. This, combined with manufacturing processes that have a smaller impact on the planet, is how Decathlon paves the way for new product development. By taking an Ecodesign approach to product development, whereby the environment is considered from the very first design stages, Decathlon is at the cutting edge of the market, and importantly, stays true to the brand by being helpful to the planet and its people.

“Our Sports Labs in France are full of expert product engineers who use cutting edge innovation to create new products designed specifically to meet a consumer need. We create our products with real people in

mind. One example I’m really proud of is our recent release of the first ever post-mastectomy sports bra,” says Mazillier.

Discussing the role of social media, Eric speaks about how the team at Decathlon believe that social media should be a community where brands can connect and interact with customers in an open and genuine way. He goes on to say that social media for them is, ironically, about using modern technology to highlight the human side of the brand.

“At the heart of our success is the real and genuine love and passion for sports. All our key differentiators revolve around this, from our people in-store who offer specialist expert advice and help to our customers across 70 different sports, to Decathlon’s main brand objective of making sports accessible for the many.”

As he looks to what comes next, Mazillier feels the greatest challenge for Decathlon will be achieving their desired growth in a sustainable way.

“As a large global retailer we have a huge responsibility to protect our planet, to ensure that future generations can enjoy the privileges that we take for granted today,” Mazillier concludes.



Livingston, Scotland



Barcelona, Spain



Stuttgart, Germany



Ontario, Canada



Egaleo, Greece

DEVELOPER PROFILE - ASSETS PROPERTIES MANAGEMENT



The Boulevard
Doha, Qatar



Evolving Every Day

Assets Properties Management, part of the Qatar-based Power International Holding Group, is a multi-sectoral organisation that caters to the ever-evolving needs of society. In this interview, RLI sits down with company CEO Rony Mourani to discuss its rapid growth, its expanding portfolio and its objectives moving forward.

A fast-growing regional multi-service company, Assets Properties Management (APM) strives to lead the real estate market through sustainable development and stimulating economic growth to improve people's living and working condition. The business aims to create value beyond real estate by shaping the future of how we live, work and evolve.

Its disciplines and expertise encompasses advisory services for strategic planning, marketing & events management, leasing & brokerage services, finance and banking management, property management, fully integrated facilities management, asset management, tenant fit-out delivery management, human resources services & government relations, and retail development.

The company continues to expand the offerings within its portfolio across a multitude of various sectors in order to play their part in achieving the objectives of the Qatar National Vision 2030.

The Mall of Qatar, which launched in 2016, is one of the major success

stories of APM, and the mall has been growing in strength ever since its launch. The spotlight will be put on the development, and indeed the region of Qatar more than ever later this year when the country plays host to the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

"Over 1.5 million fans are expected in Qatar to witness the World Cup and its many stadiums built to accommodate the visitors, with one of the most prominent ones being Al Rayyan Stadium which is a short walk from Mall of Qatar," highlights Rony Mourani, CEO of Assets Properties Management.

"We believe that there would be a surge in demand for hotel accommodation and other hospitality services, as well as convenient shopping. This is where our five-star Al Rayyan Hotel Doha will play a substantial role to augment the Mall of Qatar shopping and leisure experience."

To accommodate this unprecedented surge in tourism, behind the scenes APM have been preparing the Mall of Qatar by implementing a host of new features and activations.

For example, the new Welcome Park at the main entrance of the mall, is a prime point for the entire community with the first sky fountain in Qatar, an events area and 2,000sq m of multi-purpose space, with food & beverage outlets and new leasable areas to accommodate upcoming brands on-site.

Meanwhile, the Grand Zone aims to support the Mall's long-term vision of building a new active community with unique offerings and lifestyle opportunities within the same precinct. It comprises 15 residential buildings, which feature 1,013 units all fully leased to Qatar Airways cabin crew and it will be within walking distance of the site.

As Qatar strives to transition from its carbon-based economy to a knowledge-based economy by continuously investing in education and research, Sherbone School is another project that APM holds close to their heart and the Mall of Qatar is proud to host such a one-of-a-kind facility within its surrounding area.

"In the years since its launch, the mall has attracted many renowned international brands and today numerous others want to join our expanding retail offerings. The mall is also recording an increase in the number of food concepts being introduced this year, to enhance the dining experience and satisfy the culinary cravings of our valued clientele with the most celebrated casual dining concepts as well as some of the most exclusive fine dining experiences. Not only that, with our unrelenting efforts, Mall of Qatar is regaining its position as the number one to-go entertainment destination featuring a number of shows, concerts and activations to provide a holistic experience for our guests," explains Mourani.

Away from the Mall of Qatar project, The Boulevard is a dedicated outdoor street with unique and futuristic architecture, fascinating designs and air-conditioned walkways. It consists of over 100 new units that will include retail stores, specialty stores, food and beverage and entertainment units in addition to a renowned international brand flagship store in the central plaza.

In addition and in-line with the education pillar of the Qatar National Vision 2030, their proposed university campus will be an extension to the Qatar Foundation Education City – a creative and imaginative space, where the latest technology development discoveries manifest. The area will be comprised of a Primary and Secondary School, a Post Graduate Campus of

one of the leading international universities and a research centre.

Another of their projects is still in the design stage and expected to be sat within the fast-growing community of E-sports. APM has envisioned this scheme as a way to provide a flexible space to host emerging new generation trends based on new technologies and virtual reality. The project, which is being developed within the vicinity of Mall of Qatar, is projected to feature an E-Sports Arena, E-Sports Training Facilities, Product Presentation Hall, Digital Art, Digital Landscape, Drone Racetrack, Light Festival and Virtual Reality Arena.

With the new world embracing digitisation and with customers engaging in real time, Mourani feels no marketing strategy can be complete without the inclusion of social media, personalisation and online communication.

"We are very active on all social media platforms not only to engage with customers, but also to keep them informed on new developments and events. We have focused on marketing automation this year with a customer relationship program to better cater to customers' needs and expectations."

When speaking about the company's key point of difference when compared with other businesses in their sector, the CEO explains that APM's main strength is their ability to leverage their size, history, achievements and expertise.

"We work in specialisation, to ensure that each business strives to achieve the organisation's objectives and goals. Our leaders proactively work together in multi-disciplinary groups, ensuring that each business thrives and flourishes," says Mourani.

As is the case with any company growing at a fast pace, managing this growth is pivotal and it needs to be done efficiently, this is the greatest challenge facing APM in the near future so that the output is not compromised in any manner, according to Rony.

"Our brand remains focused and committed to Qatar's ambitious development plan in line with the Qatar National Vision 2030. I would like to take this opportunity to say we are lucky to be operating in Qatar, a country with visionary leadership that is forward-thinking and investment-friendly."

www.assets-intl.com



Mall of Qatar
Doha, Qatar



Mall of Qatar
Doha, Qatar



Welcome Park
Doha, Qatar



Following the Money

Mark Faithfull crunches the numbers as he looks at analysis and expansion that reflects changing markets.



Norwegian Investors Set to Take Control of London's West End

Norwegian-backed real estate companies Capco and Shaftesbury are in advanced talks about a £3.5bn merger that would unite world-famous tourist destinations, including Covent Garden, Soho and Chinatown under common ownership.

An all-share tie-up would bring together two of London's most prominent landlords, creating a powerhouse of West End property ownership as the capital tries to navigate its way towards a successful post-pandemic future. Capco is the landlord to stores and restaurants in tourist-magnet Covent Garden, while Shaftesbury owns blocks of other prime central London landmarks, such as nearby Seven Dials, Carnaby Street and Chinatown, all in the heart of the West End.

Shaftesbury would own 53 per cent and Capco shareholders would have the remainder in a deal structured as an acquisition of Shaftesbury by Capco, the companies said in a statement.

Norges Bank, Norway's sovereign wealth fund, is understood to be in favour of the deal and holds large stakes in both Capco and Shaftesbury.

As McDonald's Exits Russia, China, Turkey, Brazil and India Step-In

McDonald's has confirmed that it will permanently leave Russia after over 30 years operating in the country and has started to sell its restaurants. The move is not only hugely symbolic but comes at a time when Russia is wooing Eastern and Latin American brands to replace the Western companies temporarily or permanently closing stores.

Dozens of retail and F&B corporations have temporarily shut their stores or have announced their permanent departure from Russia, prompting the country to try and attract brands from Turkey, China, Brazil, and India. The worst case scenario for Russian shopping centres could see 30-40 per cent of stores empty, and Bulat Shakirov, President of The Russian Council of Shopping Centres (RCSC) confirmed in March that a representative of the body had visited Turkey aiming to attract more than 200 brands, with a similar mission slated for China.

Amid the exodus, Indian retailers have also spied an opportunity for expansion. Companies like home furnishing retailer Maspar and fashion retailer Killer Jeans are understood to be looking to open in Russia, while at least four companies have already agreed franchise agreements, with more expected to follow suit.

McDonald's departure came after it temporarily closed its 850 outlets in March and the fast food giant said Monday that it made the decision because of the "humanitarian crisis" and "unpredictable operating environment" caused by the Ukraine war.



UK Retailers Form Alliance to Demand End to 'Shops Tax'

Some of the UK's biggest and most influential retailers have formed a temporary group called the Retail Jobs Alliance in an attempt to force an overhaul of Britain's outdated business rates. Grocery giants Tesco, Sainsbury's and Morrisons are among those to have agreed to back the Alliance in a fresh push to reform the UK's controversial business rates and to demand the introduction of a new online sales tax.

The coalition is urging Rishi Sunak to rip up Britain's decades-old business rates regime, which have long been a source of dismay for store-based retailers and landlords. They claim that the punitive nature of the business rates does not recognise the pressure physical retailing is operating under and also hands a huge commercial advantage to online players and e-commerce specialists, creating an uneven playing field.

In a letter to Sunak, the new alliance - which also includes the Co-op Group, Kingfisher, Waterstones and food chain Greggs, plus a number of retail trade bodies - said it was writing on behalf of organisations collectively employing more than one million people - or one-third of the entire industry's workforce.



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Better Business and Behavioural Science

In this edition's Retail Insight, Anthony Tattum, Founder & CEO of award-winning marketing agency Big Cat discusses how retail and leisure brands and operators can thrive in the current global and regional climate.



We're almost half way through 2022. We were promised an end to economic turmoil post COVID. But consumers are feeling the cold bite of price increases even as the UK is thawing out.

People are trading up their 2021 staycations for beach holidays abroad. They are also choosing to move house as a cheaper alternative to extending and improving their current home. There's a bun fight for the best talent and loyal customers, adding further pressure to costs and prices.

We live in times of abundance. Consumers have so much choice. Similarly with talent... there are more jobs than brilliant people to fill them. The big tech companies are even competing for our customers' attention and disposable income with multi-billion dollar movie and box set budgets.

What does this mean to the retail and leisure industry and how can we navigate it and thrive?

In an article I wrote for RLI way back in 2020 I wrote about Survival of the Fastest in relation to adapting business models in reaction to the global pandemic. I believe now we're back in the good old fashion survival of the fittest. There will be a thinning of the herd throughout the next year or two as the perfect storm of price and tax rises, wage pressure and war in Ukraine.

With less consumers and colleagues to go around its crucial that brands try to attract more than their fair share. Well, luckily, marketing and behavioural scientists have given us some amazing tools to attract attention and interest. But before I get into that let's talk about purpose.

I believe it's our duty; as brands, entrepreneurs, business owners, senior managers, to make a positive contribution to the planet, to people as well as make a healthy profit. We can and should be looking for opportunities to emit less carbon, to support our local communities, and really care for our employees.

I've researched, written and spoken at length about purpose and profit. These goals aren't mutually exclusive. In fact having purpose leads to profit for an increasing number of successful brands.

Reasons not to buy

Product differentiation is incredibly hard these days. I have many clients whose main point of difference is their positive impact on society, or the environment, or both. There's an inexorable rise in ethical consumers and talent that will choose to work with brands that do good in the world.

If you want to be a better business check out the Better Business Act or even become a B Corp. Renowned marketing scientist, Byron Sharp said 'do not give consumers a reason not to buy or choose your brand'. To avoid this potential own goal, ensure your business aligns the long-term interest of people, planet and profit.

Mass marketing is alive and well

Sharp also says (and proves through his work and research) brands should speak to as many potential buyers as they can, all the time. Practically speaking, this means never turning off your marketing activity, even if it goes down to a simmer from time to time.

Brands largely compete on mental and physical availability. By this I mean the bun fight for attention we talked about earlier. Being more easily brought to mind or remembered than your competition; and then being easy to find, buy or get to. Most other things, as business owners or senior managers are obsessed with, like product features, menus, experiences, stores, just aren't as important.

Influencing consumer behaviour

Scarcity and novelty are behavioural biases that brands can lean into to influence and motivate customer preference.

Special events, limited time offers, daily specials, seasonal promotions... in fact introducing new ideas and events every day, every week, every month will give you a reason to go to market, do promotion, and talk to customers. As discussed earlier you should market to all of your customers all of the time, even light and very occasional users of your product or service.

That's what is so great about your website and social media. Even if you don't have huge marketing budgets you can share all of your rich and varied activities. If you do have budget to advertise, and you have a B2C product or experience then advertising on social media can be an extremely efficient way of raising awareness of your brand and special events. Particularly if you use the newer platforms or apps like TikTok or Instagram Highlights and Reels.

The truth about social proof

Attracting crowds to special events has another benefit too, because again of our innate behavioural biases. You've heard the phrase 'people attract people'? Well there's truth and science behind it. There's a well-established behavioural bias called social proof. That is the idea that popular things become popular still because as humans we're social animals and trust in things other people are doing.

A queue of people will often attract others to join because of the promise of something interesting or tasty to be found at the front. If you can fill an event you will attract attention from passers-by, people who weren't specifically coming to your bar, shop, stand, or experience.

We have a tough year ahead but as Archie Norman, Chairman of Marks & Spencer said recently, the current level of inflation is unlikely to last more than a year. So stay lean, stay fit (fitter than your competition) and use canny marketing and behavioural science to attract more than your fair share of talent and customer.



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www.bsbgroup.com

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www.broadwaymalyan.com

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www.one-works.com

TCONCEPT



Tconcept is an international design studio based in the Netherlands. We create inspiring places around the globe, transforming destinations into experiences for people to live, work and stay. People and human scale are at the centre of what we do, our experienced and enthusiastic team work closely with our clients to meet their needs and expectations, enabling us to deliver a diverse portfolio of concept design and placemaking in urban mixed use, retail, landscaping and interior design.

www.tconcept.nl

* minimum of 12 months

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The Future of Travel & Hybrid Hospitality



Within a few short months in 2020 we saw the booming hospitality industry, linked to the creation of 20 per cent of all new jobs across the world, collapse overnight. We went from living in the most internationally mobile society we have ever seen, to being stuck within the confines of our homes. Here, Stephen McCall, CEO of edyn discusses the topic in this month's Leisure Insight.

This shift created a reckoning for both the hospitality industry and the travellers whose tastes and wishes we cater for, with extensive ramifications on the future of travel, the beginnings of which we're now starting to see.

Stuck at home, people were left to question what they really missed about travel. Busy pools and minibars, unsurprisingly, were rarely the first things to spring to mind. Instead, people craved the experiential: a fresh and beautifully designed locale, new cultures, the taste and smell of new foods, the ability to see and do entirely novel things - in short, the opportunity to immerse ourselves in a completely foreign culture.

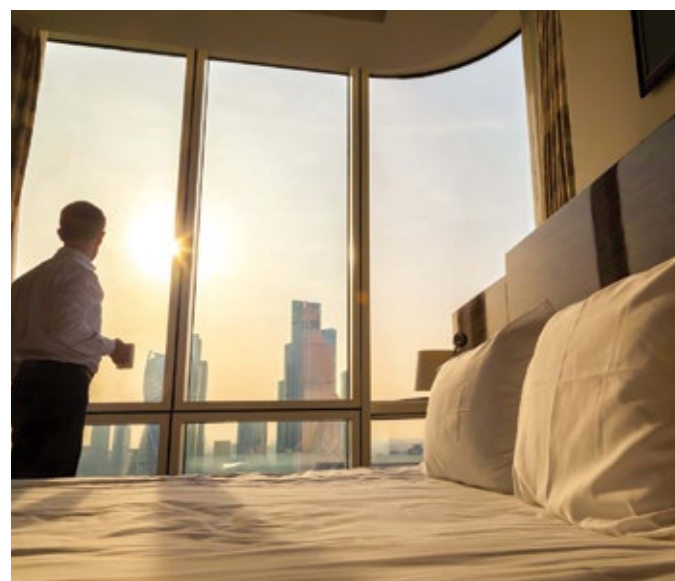
A strong desire for culturally experiential travel certainly existed before the pandemic, but the period of soul-searching which followed meant that immersive, memorable experiences were re-affirmed as the primary goal of travel. People no longer want to go to Paris just so that they can see the Eiffel Tower. They want to go to Paris so that they can come back feeling a bit more Parisian.

Tied to this growing appetite for immersive experiences has been a desire to travel for longer stints. After all, it's hard to form truly memorable experiences in one whistle-stop tour of attractions.

But the demand for longer stays has also been driven by other pandemic-induced trends. As remote working has taken hold, many of those with office jobs have come to the realisation that they can now work from anywhere. In fact, some tech companies are even giving employees the ability to work abroad for long periods of time. As such, the line between work and leisure travel has blurred, with many travellers now extending their time away by working during their visits.

Additionally, with sustainability at the forefront of people's minds, there has been a general pushback against excessive flying. In a recent survey by Booking.com, 83 per cent of global travellers said that they thought sustainable travel was vital and this sentiment looks set to intensify as the effects of climate change worsen.

The result of all this is that people want to make the most of their trips and stay for longer periods.



In just the last month, Airbnb, Vrbo, and Plum Guide have all issued statements saying that consumers have been booking longer stays. We have seen a similar trend: as demand for our offerings has grown to new heights, 60 per cent of our clients are now staying for longer than a week.

Determined to build for future success amid the pandemic, travel and hospitality businesses have been more ready than ever to seize upon these changing consumer tastes. What this has resulted in is an acceleration of prior trends to transform the face of hospitality in a lasting way.

From an operational perspective, consumers are demanding more from their experiences. They're looking for more than just a room. The pursuit of experiences in their fullest sense is quickly becoming front and centre of modern hospitality, something that has always been the focus of edyn's aparthotel brand, Locke, as we encourage our guests to engage with their local area, filling our properties with communal events and local art, food, and music.

When it comes to the growing length of stays, the industry has been similarly flexible. Many hospitality businesses have improved their pricing to encourage and accommodate extended stays, while Airbnb has even rolled out its 'split stays' feature to allow guests to turn their vacations into expansive journeys.

Perhaps the best example of how the industry has responded to both a greater demand for experiences and extended stays is the rapid expansion of hybrid hospitality, something we are pioneering. By giving guests the autonomy and security to explore on their own accord; offering them culturally enriching spaces with constantly evolving rosters of local food, drink, and events; and allowing them the flexibility to stay for as little or as long as they please; hybrid hospitality has developed to perfectly suit these shifts in taste.

That it should have adapted so well is little surprise. As a model, it has always been geared towards listening to consumers and empowering them through choice. For over fifty years, hospitality offerings were categorised from the top down. Visitors' experiences were straight jacketed by limiting labels: leisure, business, resort, luxury - the list goes on. Hybrid hospitality was built on the principle of shirking these labels and giving guests a blended experience that offers them multiple avenues to explore.

This principle of trusting and listening to guests armed the sector well for this subsequent sea change in consumer demand.

The success of the model has been evident: within global lodging, hybrid hospitality has been the fastest growing segment with a compound annual growth rate of 40 per cent since 2014. This is the most agile and modern model that the hospitality industry currently offers and it is set to go from strength to strength in the coming years.

The last few years of travel and hospitality may have been difficult ones, but the future looks far brighter. Our industry has intelligently and swiftly begun to respond to significant changes in consumer tastes. With the current second uptick in travel as border restrictions and document checks continue to subside, we are confident that these changing tastes - and the hybrid hospitality boom they encouraged - are here to stay.

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www.vizona.com/clients

* minimum of 12 months

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Hollywood Park
Los Angeles, US
Developer: Wilson Meany



Transforming Communities

Urban regeneration is a program of land redevelopment that is often used to address urban decay in cities. It involves the clearing out of dilapidated areas in inner cities to create opportunities for higher class housing, businesses and other developments. Over the coming pages, RLI takes a look at a selection of global projects that highlight unique examples of urban regeneration.

According to an article entitled 'What is urban regeneration? Definition and meaning' by Enel X, urban regeneration is an approach to city planning to repair the social and economic problems of an urban area, improving the physical and environmental aspects of the city, as well as the buildings. Urban renewal aims to transform obsolete or blighted areas into economically productive areas of a community.

In practical terms, it means an overall plan and vision for cities that is oriented towards energy efficiency and social inclusivity. It is designed to bring back underutilised assets and to redistribute opportunities, increasing urban prosperity and quality of life; however these initiatives are complex, lengthy and run the risk of gentrifying private space or privatising the public one, the article continues.

Global urban regeneration projects

A major scheme in Los Angeles is the retail component at Hollywood Park, a 300-acre mega-development in Inglewood centred on SoFi Stadium. In total, there will be up to 890,000sq ft of retail surrounded by creative office space. Much more than retail, the site will be home to residences, a park, and the stadium is nearby as well. Stan Kroenke is leading the Hollywood Park development with Wilson Meany acting as the development manager. Kroenke owns the Los Angeles Rams. Christopher Meany, Managing Partner at Wilson Meany, added that in order to create that special sense of place you need retail to give visitors and residents a walkable area. Hollywood Park will have a combination of large tenants, such as a Cinopolis movie theatre and smaller tenants, including Sky's Gourmet Tacos, Red Bay Coffee and Antojitos Martin, a juice and snack bar.

Distrito Armida
Monterrey, Mexico
Developer: GM Capital



The Well
Toronto, Canada
Developers: RioCan & Allied Properties



Distrito Armida is a new multi-phase mixed-use community in the upscale city of Monterrey, Mexico, masterplanned and designed by JERDE. It is located in a district known for modern office offerings, and thus to fit within the district, Distrito Armida offers a full mixed-use project with premier office opportunities. To support these new offices, a full-spectrum community is conceived, one that includes all support programs for a fully serviced lifestyle. Situated in the south-eastern edges of San Pedro Garza Garcia, the location of Distrito Armida is uniquely positioned to create an essential, lively, and unique offering. Views of the iconic mountain skyline of Monterrey, proximity to vibrant communities, a world-class business context, and multitudes of retail and entertainment opportunities will all serve to attract young professionals, families, and business owners with a modern outlook and appreciation for urban living. The first three phases of the project are clustered at the southern end of the site and will provide the neighbourhood with office and residential towers, a hotel, retail, and a wide array of public spaces for the community. The neighbourhood of San Pedro Garza Garcia stands somewhat separated from the city centre of Monterrey and is an upscale district for young professionals.

The Well, dubbed as the most ambitious mixed-use endeavour in Canada, is being developed by RioCan and Allied Properties and

designed by Hariri Pontarini Architects. The scheme is located in the heart of Toronto's west end. Bordering Front, Spadina, and Wellington, the design includes 1.1 million square feet of office space, 500,000sq ft of retail and food services, and 1,700 residential units spread throughout six buildings connected to a three-level retail base. With the retail and office components opening this year and the residential element opening in 2023, The Well will become a unique mix of shops, restaurants, fresh food markets, workspaces and residences that set the stage for innovative collaborations and meaningful experiences in culture, entertainment, community and wellness. The Well has achieved Platinum-level WIRED certification from WireScore for its building's best-in-class digital connectivity, technological infrastructure, and commitment to emerging digital trends.

PLP Architecture has unveiled vision for Tokyo Cross Park masterplan, which will create a new district redevelopment in the prestigious Uchisaiwaicho 1-Chome district of Tokyo, Japan. The site is at the very centre of Japanese culture, economy and politics. The masterplan, covering a 230-hectare 'green heart', will be connected to the 16ha Hibiya Park and look across to the Imperial Palace of Tokyo. The site will include four towers, a 31m tall podium and a 2ha public plaza, together containing offices, commercial facilities, hotels, residential, co-creation

Tokyo Cross Park
Tokyo, Japan
Master Designer & Placemaking
Strategist: PLP Architecture





Shougang Park Urban Weaving District
Beijing, China
Developer: Shougang Group

spaces and an extensive public realm. The Tokyo Cross Park envisions the growth of the capital's green space, outwards from the Imperial Palace and Hibiya Park into the urban districts of the city. The new development has extensive green spaces and water, which will connect with the park through two pedestrian 'park bridges'. PLP serves as the master designer and placemaking strategist for the entire 1.1 million square metre development, the largest in the metropolitan area of Tokyo, the firm will design two of the four mixed-use towers on the 6.5-hectare site. The project is developed for a multi-stakeholder partnership, which will comprise of 10 of Japan's most prominent companies. The multi-disciplinary group came together to co-create a new vision for urban development in Tokyo.

Lead8, the international award-winning design firm was the overall masterplanner for the Shougang Park Urban Weaving District in Beijing. The firm also delivered the architecture design of the first phase transit-oriented, mixed-use scope of the overall urban generation masterplan. The masterplan forms part of a significant rejuvenation undertaking in Beijing as the site transforms a 100-year-old Capital Steel Factory Park into a thriving multi-activity destination. Comprising retail, office, hotel, entertainment, public transport interchange (PTI), and MICE, the scheme targeted high-tech firms as future tenants. Once fully complete, the project is set to become a future flagship transit-oriented development (TOD) in the city's new Shougang North District. Located above the new metro interchange station of M11 and R1 in Shougang, the project featured as the gateway welcoming visitors to the 2022 Winter Olympics

site and was developed by Shougang Group.

Local developer SDC Imobiliare, along with overseas investment funds, has launched what they claim to be the biggest real estate project in Romania. The Transilvania Smart City mixed-use, estimated to require an investment of €700M, would see the construction of 10,000 apartments, a shopping centre, schools, supermarkets, a hotel and an aparthotel, office space, parks, and conference rooms in Cluj-Napoca. Work on the project began earlier this year. The entire project will be built on a plot of 35ha on a hill close to the Iulius Mall shopping centre. The project's first stage will be developed on 3ha of land and will include 800 apartments, an aparthotel, nursery, shops, cafes, restaurants, a gym, a bank, a Lidl store and a park. The construction work for this first stage is expected to be completed in 18-24 months. The shopping centre, which will be developed in a later stage, will have an area of 100,000sq m.

The concept of the mixed-use development at Topkapı, a site of historical significance in Istanbul, has just been unveiled to the Turkish market. Chapman Taylor has developed innovative architectural solutions to bring this neighbourhood to life with parks, shopping streets, offices, a five star hotel and residences and a Lifestyle Centre to create a major new attraction for the city. Due to launch next year by developer Akzive Gayrimenkul, the scheme will be set in a superb location to the west of central Istanbul with direct access to the major E5 highway, Topkapı 29 will have further transportation links to the West with a new metro station. A two-level retail street provides active frontage to the south



Transilvania Smart City
Cluj-Napoca, Romania
Developer: SDC Imobiliare



Paupys
Vilnius, Lithuania
Developer: Darnu Group

of the project and wraps around the central residential community. By making use of the level changes the retail street creates two ground levels sinuously flowing from the Metro Plaza in the west to the Lifestyle Centre in the east.

Recognised as the best conversion project in the Baltics, Paupys is being developed in the UNESCO-protected Vilnius Old Town, on an abandoned factory site. In 2015, the buildings were dismantled and the 6ha area cleaned and decontaminated. Today, a new district, created by seven prominent architecture studios, provides residential quarters, commercial area and offices. The integrated urban environment offers a cinema, a conference centre, restaurants, retail and services centred around a marketplace. Everything was carefully chosen to create a communal district with its unique atmosphere. Paupys residents are provided with privacy, a riverside, communal spaces and architecture extending the Old Town. Darnu Group is the company behind it and construction is ongoing.

LaMercedes is the conversion of the former Mercedes car factory in Barcelona into a mixed-use eco-district, building on its rich industrial heritage. Being developed by Conren Tramway and whose architect is Batlle i Roig, the uses of LaMercedes have been organised around work, live, learn and play concepts: 1,450 residential units (40 per cent social), 15,000sq m ground floor retail providing everything users need, 69,000sq m office and education campus and more than 50 per cent of the plot's footprint for green areas and public space, LaMercedes has been designed following the highest sustainability criteria in alignment

with the UN's 2030 SDG and the EU New Green Deal objectives. The scheme is currently down for a 2022 opening.

Borough Yards is a new dining, shopping and cultural destination in the heart of medieval London. Situated in the London Borough of Southwark, next to the vibrant Borough Market, Borough Yards is bringing new life to an area rich with history. Continuing to open in phases throughout 2022, the project will feature five mixed-use buildings including Grade-A workspace, retail, gallery, restaurants, cinema and creative spaces. The high-quality public realm scheme will restore and reinvent the lost medieval street pattern of the area adjacent to the world-famous food destination Borough Market. Restoring and rejuvenating an important part of south London's Victorian railway heritage, the landmark scheme will also re-purpose 8,500sq m of existing railway arches, creating 50 units for retail, food & drink and leisure brands to use as their canvas to create and innovate. The architectural design weaves together historic fabric with contemporary architecture and new public spaces, opening the site to its Bankside context and bringing new pedestrian routes and amenities to the area.

Paddington Square is the centrepiece of Paddington's regeneration, a new working, shopping, dining, and cultural quarter created by world-renowned architect Renzo Piano and Shard developer Sellar, in partnership with Hotel Properties Limited. At its heart is a light-filled crystalline building providing 14 floors of workspace incorporating wellbeing and sustainability features and smart technology, 80,000sq ft of shops and restaurants will serve the area's 55,000 worker population, a projected



Borough Yards
London, UK
Developer: MARK

Dubai Hills Mall
Dubai, UAE
Developer: Emaar



113.5 million commuters and an untapped affluent residential catchment. Seamlessly integrated with London’s Paddington Station, a landscaped public piazza with specially commissioned artworks forms part of a new and improved station arrival experience, whilst a new Bakerloo Line ticket hall directly below the offices, connects a contemporary mix of 40 shops and restaurants. A two-storey retail mall comprises a Tube Level convenience-led retail offer of everyday essentials, fresh food stores and grab-and-go operators; above this, Concourse Level shops extend into the main public piazza, featuring lifestyle, technology, gifts, beauty, and fashion brands. At street level, elegant double height units accommodate retail brands and restaurants with a south-facing al fresco dining terrace and signature three-level Pavilion building with rooftop. Scenic glass lifts take guests from the main public piazza to a new destination rooftop restaurant and open-air terrace at the top of the main building, where guests will enjoy striking panoramic London views day and night. Paddington Square is scheduled to complete over a number of phases; the main office building will complete in early autumn, with the 40 retail and dining spaces, public piazza and new Bakerloo Line ticket hall opening in early 2023.

Developed by Emaar and having just recently opened its doors, Dubai Hills Mall features around 600 outlets, including retail stores, restaurants and cafés. The mall boasts a gross leasable area of two million square feet, together with four major family entertainment and leisure centres, as well as a Cineplex, hypermarket, multiple anchor retail stores, an indoor roller coaster and dedicated parking for over 7,000 vehicles. The Dubai

Hills Mall project is a part of the Dubai Hills Estate project, a scheme that invites residents to live in a sophisticated address, surrounded with lush landscaped greens and pristine fairways with the iconic backdrop of the Burj Khalifa and the Dubai skyline. The scheme itself encompasses the Dubai Hill Malls, an 18-hole championship golf course, 1,450,000 square metres parks and open spaces and 180,000sq m Dubai Hills Park, as well as much more.

Saudi Arabia’s King Salman Park which is due to complete in 2025 by developer Riyadh Development Company has started construction on its Royal Arts Complex, which includes a museum, theatre, outdoor amphitheatre, artist studios and cinema halls. Covering more than 500,000sq m, the Royal Arts Complex in Riyadh is designed by Spanish architect Ricardo Bofill. It will offer “immersive experiences that cater to culture and art in all its forms”, according to a news release. The complex’s National Theater will seat 2,300 people, while another theatre will be able to seat 650 guests. The Royal Arts Complex will also include three cinema halls, and a museum reaching up to 106m in height. In addition, it will feature a library and dedicated artist studios, as well as an institute that includes three academies with its own 600-seat capacity auditorium. Once completed, King Salman Park will be the largest urban park in the world, covering more than 16sq km. It will be a global hub for culture, arts and nature, with vast green spaces, sports facilities and immersive cultural and entertainment venues. The development is part of Vision 2030, which aims to reduce Saudi Arabia’s dependence on oil by diversifying its economy.

Diriyah Square
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Developer: Diriyah Gate Development Authority



Diriyah, a SAR 64bn development project, is a 7sq km mixed-use historic, culture and lifestyle destination. Diriyah will become the Kingdom’s historic and cultural heart, proudly showcasing to the world Saudi Arabia’s more than 300 years of history through an engaging and inspiring set of heritage, hospitality, education, retail and dining experiences for residents, tourists and frequent visitors. The new development north-west of Riyadh is centred around the UNESCO World Heritage Site of At-Turaif. So far 14 international hotel brands have been confirmed, and it is expected at completion there will be 38 in total. The new global landmark, Diriyah, will be created in a Najdi architectural style and showcase authentic Saudi Arabian environments. The historic town of Diriyah will be transformed into a global tourism destination with its main anchors rooted in its historic culture and heritage. It aims to be developed as an urban, mixed-use development inspired by the principles of both new urbanism and historical Najdi architectural typology. It will be home to more than twenty luxury and ultra-luxury hospitality venues offering genuine experiences that reflect the rich history and culture of Diriyah and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Ultimately, the destination will include museums, galleries, restaurants, retail experiences, public squares, hotels, multiple recreational spaces, residences, educational institutions and offices.

A major scheme by developer GV Group is the revolutionary Times Square project in Egypt which is situated at the heart of Port Said, one of the most important cities and ports in the world and at 31,500sq m, the scheme is being designed to become the city’s new central hub. The

development will feature multiple experiences in one place including Times Residence which is where the smart homes of Times Square will be delivered and fully finished with central AC and a rich diversity of areas catered to customer’s needs. In addition there will be Times Premiere, which will be fully furnished hotel apartment units, Times Towers which is the business hub that will be fully equipped to meet business needs with the latest technology, facilities and services and Times Hotel, a cozy business-orientated hotel that will be situated on the main street. Finally, the Times Mall will be a design masterpiece that houses a variety of retail shops, cinemas, entertainment and exquisite F&B experiences, all created with care for individuals’ and families’ enjoyment.

Located in a strategic position between Tunis city centre and Tunis Carthage International Airport and being designed by Design International and developed by SPLT (Société de Promotion du Lac de Tunis) and Indigo Properties, Tunis Garden City will be the first development of a larger masterplan that will change the face of Tunis when it launches in 2024. Tunis Garden City is designed to give back to the city of Tunis an urban space where people can live, work, and enjoy life. The mall is porous like the new city of Tunis. Everything is connected together and it will feature 150 retail outlets, distributed across two floors, with a mix of shops and restaurants that face both the indoor galleria and the outdoor boulevard. Ultimately, Tunis Garden City will be a new post-Covid-19 city, symbolising a new Tunisian renaissance.

Times Square, Egypt
Developer: GV Group



Tunis Garden City
Tunis, Tunisia
Developer: Indigo Property





The Greenhouse
Chalhoub Group
Dubai, UAE

Taking Centre Stage

Sustainability is today very much at the forefront of the global agenda as retailers and retail real estate schemes are increasingly re-directing their strategies and investments towards sustainable and responsible growth. Over the next few pages, we will take a closer look at Green Initiatives across the industry and highlight a selection of retailers and schemes that are leading the way.

While sustainability has always been an important factor, in the last few years its significance to retail has grown immeasurably as retail companies and retail real estate schemes across the world incorporate it into their work more than ever before.

Why is this? Well, an article by Alexis Damen entitled 'A Retailer's Guide to Sustainability: How to Make Your Store More Sustainable' offers a startling statistic... nearly 50 per cent of consumers globally are choosing to buy from brands with a clear commitment to sustainability.

So essentially, sustainability is what the market wants, and what it needs to move forward as issues such as climate change, excess waste and unethical labour practices are much more salient than they used to be as consumers become more conscious of what shop they spend their money and in what location.

Alshaya Group is an excellent example of a business that is changing the way in which they approach their business to minimise the negative impacts they have on the world. In 2021 alone, they diverted 19 tonnes of expired stock from landfill and over 200 tonnes of CO2e and they supported nine charities in eight countries. The company by its nature has a huge impact on climate change and they are putting in place the tools and equipment they need to monitor and reduce their carbon emissions as well as water consumption throughout the business.

A pioneer in the sustainability sector, Chalhoub Group operates a comprehensive framework consisting of the five pillars of Leadership,

People, Partners, Planet and Impact to foster sustainability. They strive to create a positive impact on People, Partners, and the Planet in the eight countries where we have a direct presence to contribute to national and global agendas to help meet local environmental and societal needs. This is their Chalhoub Impact. As part of their initiatives, they have launched the Chalhoub Greenhouse where one element they focus on is their fashion brand incubator which highlights streetwear, sustainable fashion, contemporary design and accessories across multiple start-ups.

Meanwhile, finding virtuous and circular solutions to waste-related problems sits within H&M Group's goal to use only recycled or sustainably sourced materials by 2030. H&M's "Looop" is an in-store recycling initiative which is essentially a garment-to-garment recycling system which is designed to incentivise customers to recycle their old clothes. Although some sustainably sourced virgin materials must be added to strengthen the yarn, the system transforms old clothing into new ones, while not using any water or chemicals. The system recaptures valuable raw materials in recycled clothing and regenerates them back into fibres that are spun into new yarn and knitted into new clothes.

With new sustainability commitments, Allbirds accelerates its 'Cradle-To-Grave Approach' that incorporates consumers and the supply chain. The footwear and apparel company that is known for its innovative materials and carbon neutral commitment has announced new, aggressive sustainability commitments for 2025 and 2030, including



Looop, H&M
Stockholm, Sweden



expands to a near-zero per-unit carbon footprint by 2030. These goals translate to a science-based target to reduce absolute scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions by 42 per cent by 2030—and Allbirds aims to bring others along to amplify this impact.

Dutch cosmetics brand Rituals is another company committed to making a positive impact on the world and they are implementing environmentally-friendly improvements wherever they can. They take a holistic approach to selecting their ingredients, packaging, materials and fabrics, taking multiple aspects into account to make actual sustainable choices. The company is committed to realising their goal of zero-waste packaging by 2025, meaning all their products will be either refillable, recyclable and/or made from recycled material. Their sustainability approach ensures that their customers can continue to enjoy their favourite items at a lower price while being conscious of the planet too.

Ocean positive international sailmaker and sailing wear company North Sails is a leading light in the sector of sustainability. The company gives a voice to the ocean and they work tirelessly in the pursuit of ocean regeneration through their "Adopt a Coral" initiative. The company is on a sustainability journey and they challenge themselves with future-focused vision statements that act as the North Star to them. Just last year, they achieved an important step in this journey by obtaining the B Corporation™ certificate. By being a B Corp™, we commit to respecting the highest standards in terms of social and environmental performance, by bringing a positive impact rather than just generating profits. To learn more about this initiative and the company, please see our lead interview on the company on pages 20-21.

Launched last year, L'OCCITANE en Provence opened its first ever #Mega Sustainability Concept Store at Pacific Place, Hong Kong.

Standing for #MakeEarthGreenAgain, the store invites the local community to join forces in reducing plastic waste and support the local sustainable plastic economy. The #MEGA Sustainability Concept Store engages the public in environmental protection in a fun way with the #MEGA Sustainability Reward Program. Shoppers can earn rewards by achieving varied 'green tasks' – from dropping their beauty empties to the recycle bins in store and making a green commitment with the Tree of Wishes to completing a three-minute personal carbon footprint evaluation.

The production of denim can be extremely wasteful, and the heritage jeans brand Levi's is doing its part to change the industry. Some commitments Levi's is working toward by 2025 include using 100 per cent sustainably sourced cotton, having 100 per cent renewable energy in Levi's owned and operated facilities, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40 per cent across its entire supply chain. The brand is also pioneering innovative, durable fabrics (such as cottonized hemp) that require less waste and resources to produce. Levi's also has a Worker Well-Being program, through which it "partners with suppliers and local organizations to implement programs focused on financial empowerment, health and family well-being, and equality and acceptance."

Whilst retail companies across the globe are playing their part in the sustainability drive, retail real estate developments are doing exactly the same and throughout the world new initiatives and programmes are being devised to make the next-generation destination more sustainable than ever before.

The Red Sea Project in Saudi Arabia is grounded in sustainability and sustainable tourism in its fullest sense. This includes protecting the



Therme
Manchester, UK

environment and the species that call it home, as well as supporting the local communities living in close proximity to the destination. They are committed to aligning the Project with all 17 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The master plan is informed by the largest marine spatial planning simulation ever undertaken, modelling the environmental impact of developing and operating the destination. The site is underpinned by a smart destination management system that will monitor the environmental impact of our operations, manage visitor movement to avoid over-tourism and provide guests with a seamless, personalised experience. Their aim is to set new standards in regenerative tourism, sustainable development, respecting the natural world, creating opportunities for the local communities and protecting and enhancing the destination for the future.

Meanwhile in the UK, Therme Group has unveiled an updated design for Therme Manchester well-being resort. Therme Group is working in partnership with Peel L&P to deliver the project, at a cost of over £250M and builds upon many exciting elements in the existing planning consent. In addition to a 'next generation' waterpark, thermal bathing and a wellbeing spa, these include immersive digital art, an on-site urban farm and botanical gardens. This combination of features highlights Therme's aim to be far more than just a waterpark and spa, but to create an integrated experience to benefit physical and mental health. The updated plans adopt the very latest technology to make the development even more sustainable and deliver additional exciting

features for visitors. They involve a greater integration of biophilic design elements, including double-curved roofs, which reduce the amount of steel required, increasing the sustainability of the development. The new design also includes a green 'vertical forest' multi-storey car park to be located at Peel L&P's Trafford Palazzo. This new addition removes the need for under-venue parking and, therefore, reduces the amount of excavation needed, simplifying the build process and lowering environmental impact. New guest attractions include an all-season urban beach and the world's first living waterslides to incorporate a 3D-printed superstructure housing thousands of plants. Innovative 'welltech' experiences will be available, such as a snow room, multi-sensory showers and oxygen rooms, and a visitor and education centre will welcome school and community groups for events on sustainability, food and nature. Construction of the development is scheduled to begin in 2023, with a build time of around two years.

Elsewhere in the UK, the Eden Project has teamed up with Canary Wharf Group (CWG) to increase biodiversity within the financial district and provide Eden with a base in London. Eden will create a 'green spine' through the centre of Canary Wharf, made up of parks, gardens, waterside access, performance spaces, new bridges, boardwalks and floating pontoons. There will be new spaces for arts and culture, as well as water sports such as paddle boarding, open water swimming and kayaking. "There is not a moment to waste," said David Harland, Chief Executive of Eden Project International. "CWG and Eden are



Svart Hotel
Norway

primed and ready to work together not just to make Canary Wharf a greener place rich in biodiversity, but also to share what we learn in order to bring nature back to other urban developments in the UK and across the globe. CWG and the Eden Project are both based on the transformational redevelopment of a former industrial site into a world-renowned icon of regeneration," Harland said. "Our exciting new partnership feels natural and vital."

It is not just in the area of retail that sustainability is a pivotal factor, it is now also being utilised in leisure and residential as well, as a luxury hotel at the base of Norway's Svartisen glacier will attest as it moves forward with its bold ambitions to generate more energy than it consumes within five years of opening. The base of the Svartisen glacier in the far north of Norway seems an unlikely spot for a luxury hotel and, even less so, a ground-breaking and innovative one that will utilise a remarkable array of technology and smart design to make it the first energy-positive hotel in the world. Yet this is the plan that the architect and hotel developer, Iyaylo Lefterov, is describing: the Svart, a 94-room circular glass structure that will hover over the sparkling waters of the Holandsfjorden, providing a wellness and outdoors adventure hub in the Nordland wilderness. The hotel was originally slated to open this summer but Covid-19 got in the way and it has now been delayed until late 2023. The structure will largely be built from prefabricated modules which are in factories, ready to go, spring thaw and Norwegian lockdown permitting.

It is not just Svart in the hotel and resort industry playing their part. The sustainable resort Patina Maldives opened its doors last year and is located in the North Malé Atoll, a 45-minute luxury boat ride from Malé International Airport, the five-star Patina Maldives, Fari Islands is the first resort in the Maldives to have a 100 per cent solar-powered kids' club, recreation and dive centres. Add to that, zero-waste kitchens, recycling drives, and all kinds of other energy-positive operations. Sustainability is literally in their DNA: the resort's very walls are built with energy-saving prefab techniques, which significantly reduced waste and carbon emissions. This is the first property of its kind from the lifestyle brand Patina Hotels & Resorts, courtesy of the Capella Hotel Group, and the brainchild of Brazilian architect Marcio Kogan. Alongside its 90 contemporary one-to three-bedroom Beach and Water Pool Villas, plus 20 Fari Studios, there's a kids' centre called 'Footprints', powered by Swimsol – a company that specialises in marine offshore solar panels.

Finally, the sustainable Moon Retreat opened in Sharjah last year and offers guests a comfortable setting to enjoy Sharjah. An intriguing new design feature has risen out of the sands in Sharjah, UAE – the emirate's Moon Retreat is now welcoming guests. The eco-luxury retreat developed by Sharjah Investment and Development Authority (Shurooq) provides guests with the opportunity to enjoy a wide range of outdoor activities like trekking, star gazing, and nature-inspired experiences in the rugged Mleiha landscape. Each unit is self-sufficient, fitted with all amenities that guests would require on a day-to-day basis.



Red Sea Project
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



Canary Wharf
London, UK



The Londoner
Macao, China
Developer: Sands Retail



Hi Place
Sanya, Hainan Province, China
Developer: Kinghouse

Maintaining Momentum

The Asia-Pacific region is a major retail hotspot that accounts for more than 50 per cent of the planet's population and is the largest market in the world. Meanwhile Australasia is a unique area that is home to some of the best retail developments in the sector. Here, RLI zones in on a selection of soon-to-be or recently completed retail real estate projects to highlight how the Asia & Australasia markets are maintaining their momentum.

In the report entitled the 'Asia-Pacific Retail Industry – Major Trends, Growth and Opportunities (2020-2025)' by Mordor Intelligence, it is explained that key factors in the growth of the retail industry in this region are robust economic growth, rising population, changing consumer trends, rising purchasing power and the introduction of international retailers.

Meanwhile KPMG's 'Australian Retail Outlook 2022' explains that while the rollercoaster of uncertainty continued last year, many companies were armed with a raft of newly-acquired strategic skills that they had deployed during the first wave of Coronavirus. In addition, consumer confidence continued on uneven ground as the country went in and out of lockdowns across various cities.

JLL's 'New Zealand Retail Market Snapshot Q1 2022' explains that even though the retail market continues to be one of the hardest hit industries from the pandemic due to enforced lockdowns and trading restrictions, increased momentum indicates a positive direction since the pandemic made its presence known. There remains however a continued divergence between location and quality.

Over the next few pages RLI will look into some of the major developments in these regions to portray how Asia & Australasia is continuing to build new and exciting developments against what is still a difficult backdrop, albeit one that has some light at the end of the tunnel.

Projects Across Asia & Australasia

Amid much fanfare and spectacle, Sands China Ltd. launched The Londoner® Macao integrated resort last year. The Londoner Macao is developer Sands China's bold British-themed reimagining of the Sands® Cotai Central integrated resort, offering the best of British history and culture alongside a traditional yet contemporary hospitality experience. In addition to the Crystal Palace, the first-phase launch features new dining options, interactive London-themed attractions, and the opening of The Londoner Hotel – an all-suite tower featuring approximately 600 luxury suites. Designed by Hong Kong-based Steve Leung Design Group, suite interiors are bright and contemporary with an upscale British ambience, and feature marble nightstands, custom beds with plush fabric headboards, elegant chesterfield sofas, high-backed leather armchairs, and Victorian-style bathtubs. Representing an investment of US\$1.9bn, The Londoner Macao introduced additional integrated resort offerings progressively throughout 2021, including the Suites by David Beckham; Londoner Court, a luxury residential-style all-suite hotel; the re-themed Shoppes at Londoner retail mall which incorporates over 150 fashion and lifestyle boutiques and stores, from high street to haute couture; and the Londoner Arena.

Architects 3MIX Architecture are currently working on the Jimei City Center project which is located on the central axis of the new town of

Xiamen, 1.4km from the town's administration centre. With the project's location by the central axis, the 266m tall tower and a mall covering a total floor area of 60,000sq m, along with the distinct façade of the buildings, will undoubtedly turn the project into an iconic landmark of the new city, adding to the city's long-standing reputation. Being developed by China Communications Construction Group, the project combines various types of space including accommodation, workspace, stores, restaurants, cinema, kid's area, and abundant outdoor green area. It will provide a destination for new citizens to visit, work, and spend their leisure time. Respecting the liveable and vital characteristic of Xiamen, 3MIX are committed to create not only an urban landmark, but also a place with transparency and vitality for the local community to enjoy. The terraced landscape, waterscape sunken plaza and rooftop gardens will add to the site's greenery. An opening date is not currently available for this upcoming project.

Scheduled to open this year by developer Kinghouse, Hi Place Sanya is an additional project involving 3MIX, and the scheme is being positioned as the top "light-luxury" shopping mall in Sanya City, the mall facades are designed to depict quality with elegance and timelessness. Crystal-like media boxes work as the main elements of attraction for the facades, designed with large modules of glass curtain walls. Light grey aluminium

CCCC Jimei City Center
Xiamen, Fujian Province, China
Developer: China Communications
Construction Group



Huafa Zhongcheng Mall
Wuhan, China
Developer: Zhuhai Huafa Properties Co., Ltd.





Hengqin Village
Zhuhai, China
Developer: Shun Tak Development Limited

and high-reflective glass cladding are designed to perform as a background for the media boxes. The three main entrances are upholstered with different themes to set up a clear orientation to all pedestrian traffic. Layered material weaving enhances the mall's clarity and legibility, while reinforcing the stores' identity at the ground level. Located in the urban centre of the famous tourist city of Sanya, the Hi Place Sanya Shopping Mall is targeted at the young families and a new generation of Sanya citizens, providing not only a convenient and modern shopping centre for daily life, but also as a one-stop destination for fashion, socializing and a relaxing lifestyle.

Huafa Zhongcheng Mall is located at the eastern gateway of Wangjia Dun CBD of Wuhan, Hubei Province, at the intersection of Hankou QingNian Road and Huaihai Road. The site is surrounded by well-developed transportation, educational, and commercial facilities. Subway Line 2 and 7 are directly adjacent to the site. With a total site area of approx. 45,000sq m and total GFA of approximately 130,000sq m, the development is composed of two high-rise office towers, serviced apartments, five-star hotel, boutique art hotel and retail. The complex features a mixture of unique outdoor retail streetscape intervening with indoor shopping experience. Unveiled in December last year by Zhuhai Huafa Properties, the retail development is split mainly

into two parts; shopping mall and F&B streets created by a series of blocks, and the indoor retail mall that sits under the office towers. The design language allows for a rich variety of architectural elements to be integrated as a part of the facade. By being able to adapt to different requirements and scales of the building, it engages with the human scale to create a walkable and pedestrian friendly place.

Also launched in December last year was the Hengqin Village development by Shun Tak Development Limited and design architect JERDE. The Hengqin Village development serves as an attraction for all as well as a solution to the lack of space in Macau. Designed as a gateway attraction between Macau and Mainland China, the project provides a variety of retail, entertainment, wellness, and food & beverage options, while adding connectivity to planned office and hotel/serviced apartment towers, as well as the adjacent immigration facilities building. Located at a prime location with direct access to the port and commercial facilities at the border of Hengqin and Macau, the site enjoys a premium transport network, directly connected to the Hengqin and Macau light rails and the extension of Guangzhou-Zhuhai Intercity-Rail in the future. As the podium for two towers, our 4-level village is the heart of the project and the main connective tissue between the various programs, both vertically and horizontally. The southwest corner serves as the primary face of



CIFI Cmall
Chengdu, China
Developer: CIFI Group



Joy Breeze
Beijing, China
Developer: GRANDJOY Property Company

the project as visitors arrive from the bus depot and the immigration port building.

Finally, in December last year saw the launch of CIFI Cmall by developer CIFI Group, with architectural work undertaken by LWK + PARTNERS. With a total volume of 260,000sq m, the development is located in Xiangcheng centre, Xindu District, Chengdu. As a new generation or urban sub centre, Xiangcheng centre occupies the position of the Chengbei development centre in the Urban Diamond layout. Since its opening, the popularity of the mall has continued to rise, laying down its position as an important commercial asset in Xindu and in Chengdu as well. The vision of the project was not only to provide local residents with a place for rest, but a place for entertainment and create a regional landmark commercial complex building. In addition, they wanted to convey a dynamic and upward sense, as well as a positive attitude towards life and an integrated environmental atmosphere. The core goal of LWK's design was to establish and enhance the brand value for the owners.

Unveiled to the public in October last year by developer GRANDJOY Property Company, design architect JERDE's renovation of the Joy Breeze retail centre in Beijing was inspired by the ancient Fire God Temple located on the grounds, directly adjacent to the mall

entrance. The lantern-like aesthetic of the temple is reflected in the glowing, translucent forms of the new buildings. In Chinese culture the lanterns are a symbolic representation of celebration and prosperity, positioning this project as Beijing's new destination for urban renewal and discovery. The project is a representation of Beijing itself, home to China's second largest urban population - rich in history, while also embracing modern culture, creating a juxtaposition of new and old architecture within a cosmopolitan community. A portion of the building's northern side has been carved out to create additional outdoor public space. The captivating garden terraces created above the city streets ascend to a unique, top-level entertainment, retail, and dining destination.

Launched in June last year, Huafa Newland is strategically located at the Yangjia Bay waterfront of Weihai, China. Weihai is prefecture-level city in the eastern Shandong province and is a major business and economic centre in the region. Another scheme by developer Huafa Properties, this project aimed to define a new civic focal point for business, leisure and retail at the South end of the City. With a total site area of approximately 75,000sq m and total GFA of approximately 162,000sq m, the development is positioned as a diverse and premium mixed-use development providing office, residential apartments, F&B,



MixC
Ningbo, China
Developer: China Resources Land



11 SKIES
Hong Kong, China
Developer: New World Development

sport and leisure centre, retail spaces and movie theatres. The project is innately linked with the adjacent mixed-use 'Huafo Kowloon Bay Center' development on the Yangjia Bay waterfront. The developments interact with one another to create a continuous retail environment connecting the new CBD with the water's edge. The retail project has created an open-air "retail street" shopping and F&B destination which will generate activity and interest and draws people into the development.

Completed last year by developer China Resources Land, MixC Ningbo is a 168,000sq m retail development located near the city's Central Business District. The flagship property provides a new urban lifestyle destination with a distinctive public realm and experiential design offer. The design draws inspiration from Ningbo's heritage, referencing the historic sloping roof house buildings. The brief was to create a destination that prioritises a community-centric approach alongside commerciality, ultimately delivering a sanctuary in the city. MixC Ningbo is a new urban lifestyle destination with a distinctive public realm and experiential design offer. The dynamic multi-level retail development features a 700m street frontage, 24 hour 'Sky Walk', inbuilt Ferris Wheel and innovative placemaking strategy to create a compelling and surprising proposition for visitors.

A game-changing retailtainment destination, 11 SKIES will be Hong

Kong's largest hub for retail, dining and entertainment and the first to combine wealth management and wellness services in one complete ecosystem. Opening in phases from 2022 to 2025 by New World Development, it is set to bring brand new experiences for consumption, entertainment and wellness services to everyone. 11 SKIES will bring together 3.8 million square feet gross floor area; 2.6 million square feet of retail space, encompassing over 800 shops and more than 120 dining concepts; 570,000sq ft of experience-based entertainment facilities including immersive, fun and interactive role-play learning experiences at KidZania, and Grade-A office towers. Strategically located right next to the Hong Kong International Airport, Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, and Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link, 11 SKIES will benefit from a high volume of passengers who travel through Hong Kong International Airport, which recorded 71.5 million in 2019 and will become a centrepiece within the GBA 'one-hour living circle' and a gateway to the rest of the world.

Launched in October last year by developer Reliance Industries, Jio World Drive spans across an area of 17.5 acres at Maker Maxity and is strategically located in the Bandra Kurla Complex. Jio World Drive is Mumbai's newest, vibrant urban hangout. The precinct is home to 72 prominent International and Indian brands such as Coach, Emporio



Jio World Drive
Mumbai, India
Developer: Reliance Industries



Mitsui Shopping Park LaLaport
Bukit Bintang City Centre, Bukit Bintang, Kuala Lumpur
Developer: Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd.

Armani, Steve Madden, Gant, Dior, Clinique, Calvin Klein, SuperDry and Michael Kors amongst others, 27 culinary outlets with cuisines from across the globe, Mumbai's first rooftop Jio Drive-In Theatre, an open-air weekend community market, pet-friendly services, a dedicated pop-up experience and other bespoke services. The mall is a curated melting pot of never-seen-before brands, flagship stores, the city's first rooftop drive-in theatre, art installations, unique dining experiences, and other unforgettable experiences. Everything on-site is designed to keep customers in the now. The facade design is inspired by a French term called 'Nuage', which translates to 'cloud', is a floating hexagonal design that wraps the external façade. It assures a whole series of performance criteria including thermal insulation, solar penetration, glare reduction and visibility transparency.

Launched in January this year by developer Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd., the Mitsui Shopping Park LaLaport Bukit Bintang City Centre ("LaLaport BBCC") is the very first overseas retail facility in Southeast Asia. LaLaport BBCC is a Japanese-originated lifestyle proposal shopping mall that creates interaction, livelihood and relaxation through its core mix of commercial facilities, offices, residential sites, hotels, and other facilities. The mall boasts a wide range of tenants and brands with some of the familiar names in Japan that are making its first appearance in Malaysia over a total floor

space of 82,660sq m and 400 stores. The developer behind the scheme, Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd. is actively developing the commercial facility business in Asian countries and regions including Shanghai and Taiwan with its experience cultivated over the years in Japan. The opening of LaLaport BBCC also brings about a new customer experience with its lifestyle-based shopping mall proposition from Japan. The mall aims to become a facility that offers new culture and trends in Malaysia.

A seven storey-glass domed shopping centre which sits within the podium of a 118-storey skyscraper, the Merdeka 118 Mall development by PNB Merdeka Ventures Sdn Bhd is set to attract a wider customer base whilst creating an arresting landmark for the city. A clear and sound retail strategy created by Buchan Group will be implemented to incorporate a diverse range of experiences with the podium holding over 200 stores and a state of the art cinema complex. Meanwhile, a large, inviting and bright event space is available for hosting a wide variety of events and exhibitions and breakfast, lunch, high-tea and dinner are available via a selection of local and international al fresco restaurants. The heart of the development will be a dramatic multi-storey water feature with an interactive screen offering customised messages for shoppers' engagement called 'The Raincloud.' Opening in late 2022, Merdeka 118 Mall will offer a spectacular blend of the historic and contemporary at



Merdeka 118 Mall
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Developer: PNB Merdeka Ventures Sdn Bhd



Raffles City
The Bund, Singapore
Developer: CapitaLand

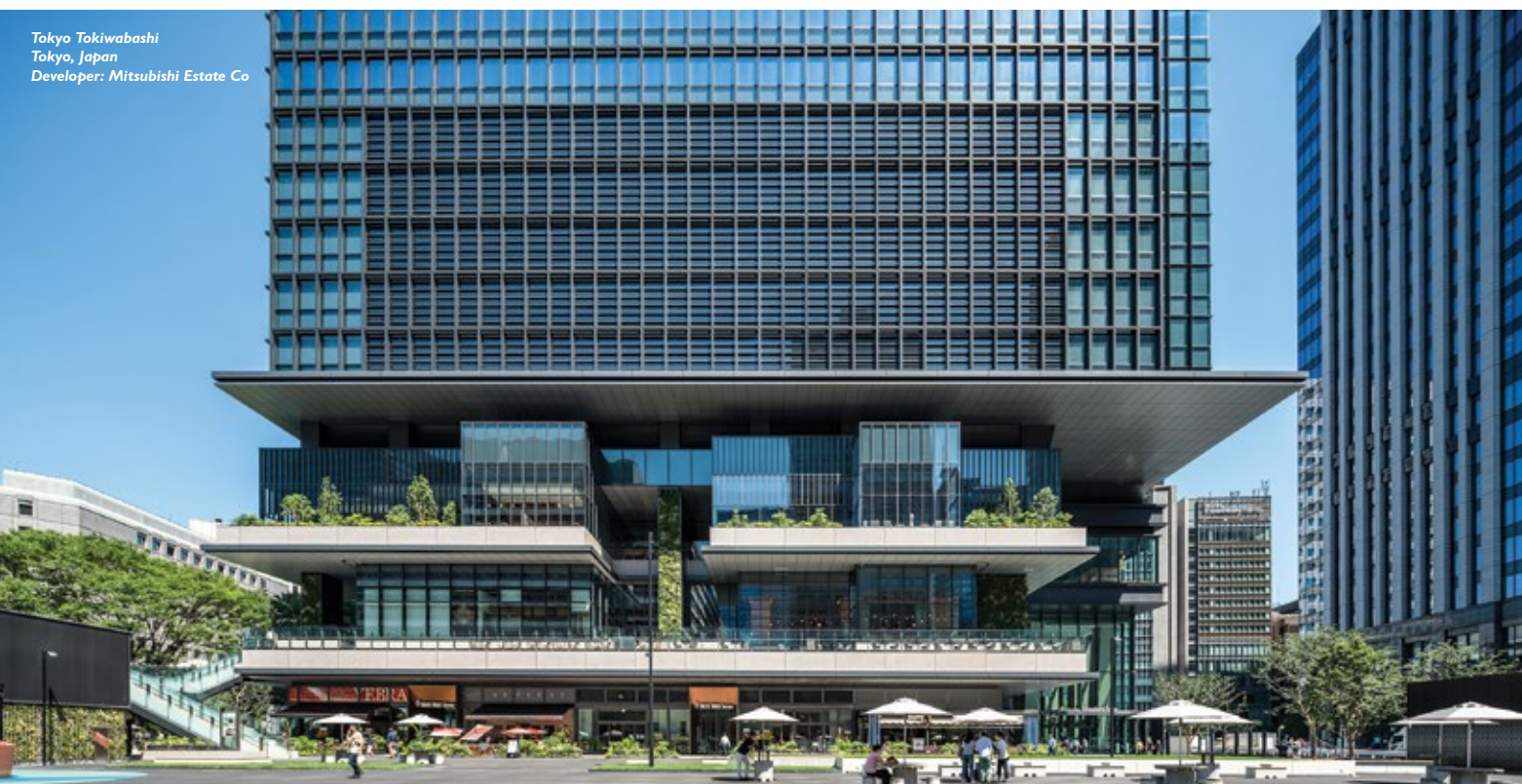
the very heart of Kuala Lumpur with around one million square feet of retail opportunities, showcasing Malaysia to the rest of the world.

A predominant project in the area, Raffles City Singapore by developer CapitaLand is on course to reach the end of its rejuvenation in Q4 2022 that will signal the integration of luxury and unique experiences into the mall. Over 50 new brands, inclusive of specialty retail stores or experiential concepts, are entering the scheme as part of the asset enhancement initiative that started in late 2021, to offer shoppers more trend-setting, luxurious and seamless shopping experiences. The mall rejuvenation, which has been in progress since late 2021, will reconfigure about 111,000sq ft of the retail space to add over 50 new brands across Levels 1 to 3, to create an elevated and international outlook. Shoppers can expect a specially curated mix of well-established, premium brands, across fashion, beauty and lifestyle categories, new retail formats and exciting digital experiences that make shopping at Raffles City engaging, enriching and delightful every time.

An additional Raffles City project was launched by CapitaLand back in July last year; the opening of Raffles City The Bund was the latest testament to CapitaLand's strengths in iconic integrated developments. The final component in the over 300,000sq m megastructure was to welcome the public to the 120,000sq m shopping mall. The retail component of Raffles

City The Bund, CapitaLand's third and largest Raffles City development in Shanghai, opened to great fanfare and a healthy committed occupancy of 92 per cent highlighted the depth and diversity of China's retail scene. The integrated development is located along Huangpu River in Shanghai's fast-developing North Bund, a commercial and cultural hub with direct access to metro Line 12. Designed by Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects with Benoy, the architecture comprises two 50-storey premium Grade-A office towers linked at the base by a six-storey mall (four levels above ground and two basement levels). Lauded as Shanghai's tallest twin towers with a height of 263m, Raffles City The Bund offers stunning 270-degree panoramic views of Shanghai Bund and Lujiazui central business district on both sides of Huangpu River.

The large-scale redevelopment of Tokyo Tokiwabashi by Mitsubishi Estate Co in the Tokiwabashi District in front of Tokyo station covers an area of 3.1ha and will be the largest project in the vicinity. The project comprises the following: two large-scale mixed-use buildings, Tower-A and B; an underground substation, Building C; a sewage pump facility, Tower-D; a large plaza; and Tokiwabashi Park (building names are provisional). One feature of this project is that the work will be carried out in stages while enhancing the functions of key urban infrastructure such as the substation and sewage pump facility. Tower-A was completed



Tokyo Tokiwabashi
Tokyo, Japan
Developer: Mitsubishi Estate Co



Melbourne Quarter
Melbourne, Australia
Developer: Lendlease

at the end of June 2021. The four buildings will be 140,000sq m, 490,000sq m, 20,000sq m and 30,000sq m in size, providing a mix of offices, retail and parking. The opening dates for this project are spread between 2021 and 2027.

A key project by developer Lendlease is Melbourne Quarter, which is a vibrant commercial, residential, retail and cultural city neighbourhood – an authentic part of Melbourne's CBD connecting the historic grid to the emerging Southern Cross Precinct. Melbourne Quarter is centrally located in the city directly opposite Southern Cross station, with extensive frontages to Collins Street and Flinders Street. It is one of the largest new mixed-use urban regeneration developments in Melbourne. The brand new city block will include three next-generation commercial towers, three residential apartment towers, and a diverse retail mix of food, lifestyle and wellbeing. More than 50 per cent of Melbourne Quarter will be open space, with public spaces including Melbourne's first Sky Park, a major public square on Collins Street, a new neighbourhood park off Flinders Street and an exciting new Melbourne laneway, connecting Collins and Flinders Streets. On full completion, Melbourne Quarter is expected to accommodate approximately 14,000 workers and over 3,000 residents. Construction at Melbourne Quarter commenced in 2016 and is being delivered in stages over approximately six to

eight years.

The Harbourside Shopping Centre at Darling Harbour in Sydney, Australia, is proposed to be redeveloped by the property owner, investment firm Mirvac Group. The redevelopment project was approved by the New South Wales Government's Independent Planning Commission in June 2021. The shopping centre has been in existence since 1988 and is currently outdated. Set to be built in stages, the redevelopment project is anticipated to involve an investment of \$518M. The plan comprises the demolition of the existing shopping centre to create a new 87,000sq m mixed-use development including a new retail shopping centre, a residential tower, and significant enhancements to the public realm. The Harbourside Shopping Centre's redevelopment will deliver one of the most innovative retail, entertainment and tourist destinations in Sydney. The mixed-use project aims to improve the experience for shoppers and establish Harbourside as a revitalised retail and residential quarter in the city. Once complete, the centre will house 24,000sq m of office space, 7,000sq m of retail and 350 apartments. There will also be 10,000sq m of public domain, including the 3,500sq m Guardian Square and a widened waterfront promenade. Construction is expected to commence in 2023, subject to approvals.



Harbourside Shopping Centre
Sydney, Australia
Developer: Mirvac Group



People, Planet, Profit

This year's MAPIC Italy took place on 18-19 May at the Superstudio Maxi in Milan and it came at a time of unprecedented opportunity. After two of perhaps the most challenging years in the history of retail, leisure and food and beverage, a picture of the new consumer landscape began to emerge at this two-day event.

The MAPIC Italy conference programme highlighted how the retail sector is navigating towards a more 'human' world after the industry went through a very difficult 2021. The pandemic accelerated many changes in consumer habits, most of which were already underway, obliging all of us to adapt our way of living and doing business.

It is now time for retail and property players to face the challenges and opportunities post-Covid - A world built around human beings, their needs, new behaviours and new ways of living. Today the world is a place where the boundaries between digital interactions and physical experiences are blurring and where sustainability and responsible consumption are no longer optional.

MAPIC Italy 2022 continued to play its role as a barometer and window of the industry, guiding all the market players and helping them to navigate this continuously changing world.

The new consumer requires consumption to have meaning, wants

businesses to have purpose and to understand that their role goes beyond profit: it must have a role in community, the environment and in society. Whilst at the same time, they also want super-fast delivery, cheaper prices, and immediate availability from fast fashion and e-commerce giants. To thrive, the industry must understand and reflect these new priorities. The status quo is no longer good enough.

Such fundamental changes and differing influences provide a world of opportunity for a genuine retail revolution. MAPIC Italy 2022 stressed the importance of new business models and fresh ways of thinking, for a customer base motivated by different fundamentals, from ethical buying to the sharing economy, experience to socialisation. At the heart of all these inter-connected themes, which reflect the fundamental changes happening across retail and leisure, will be sustainability. The consumer and the planet demand it and for retail it is not optional.

Key MAPIC Themes

MAPIC Italy featured six pillars on its programme allowed participants to identify the right business partners to help them to create new and unique lifestyle & experiential destinations:

Sustainability - Next generation retail is about putting people and the planet first. From the huge rise in second-hand fashion and a focus on waste reduction, energy efficiency to ethical sourcing and greater community engagement, retailers, developers, investors and new comers, all have a responsibility to have a positive impact.

The rise of mixed-use and the evolution of traditional property assets - Mixed-use has become the dominant development platform, with projects - new or existing - where destinations create a sense of place and community. This might be with offices, co-working, leisure, F&B, health and well-being and, of course, retail. This is a very important area for cities to create more sustainable places to live, play, shop and work.

New retail - A new generation of retailers, many of whom started life online, are redefining the retail landscape and appealing to an increasingly ethical consumer. The optimisation of social media to fresh approaches to in-store and omni-channel retailing, digital native vertical brands (DNVBs), fast-delivery specialists and marketplaces were discussed.

Leisure - People are social and love to interact. The programme reflected the growing popularity and diversification of the leisure sector, from VR and AR to competitive socialising, amusement parks, themed

attractions, sports and wellbeing, arts and culture. It showed how leisure is adding to the brand experience with store and brand licencing.

Food - The huge expansion in choice of food and beverage operators, reflecting global tastes and different lifestyles, has seen the food and beverage industry boom in recent years. MAPIC's food forum, The Happetite, later in the year, will showcase the best F&B has to offer, examine new business models, the rise of dark kitchens and delivery, and highlight innovation in areas such as reducing food waste.

Innovation - MAPIC has increasingly reflected the introduction of digital innovation into retail and destinations with innovations that help the industry to better understand and serve customers. Digital innovation enhances the consumer experience, represents the intersection of physical and online and helps retailers and landlords capture important data on their visitors and shoppers.

Exhibitors at the event were BNP Paribas, Svicom, Pradera, Savills, CBRE, Eurocommercial Properties, IGD SIQ, Engel & Völkers, Cushman & Wakefield & Multi, and retailers on-site included YellowKorner, Dental Pro, Löwengrube, NAU!, Casa Piocheur, UCI Cinemas, Kuwait Petroleum Italia spa, L'Erbolario, Caffè Ottolina, Giovanni Rana e Pandora.

Plans are moving ahead for the full MAPIC event in Cannes at the Palais des Festivals across the 29 November - 1 December 2022. For more information on this event, please visit www.mapic.com



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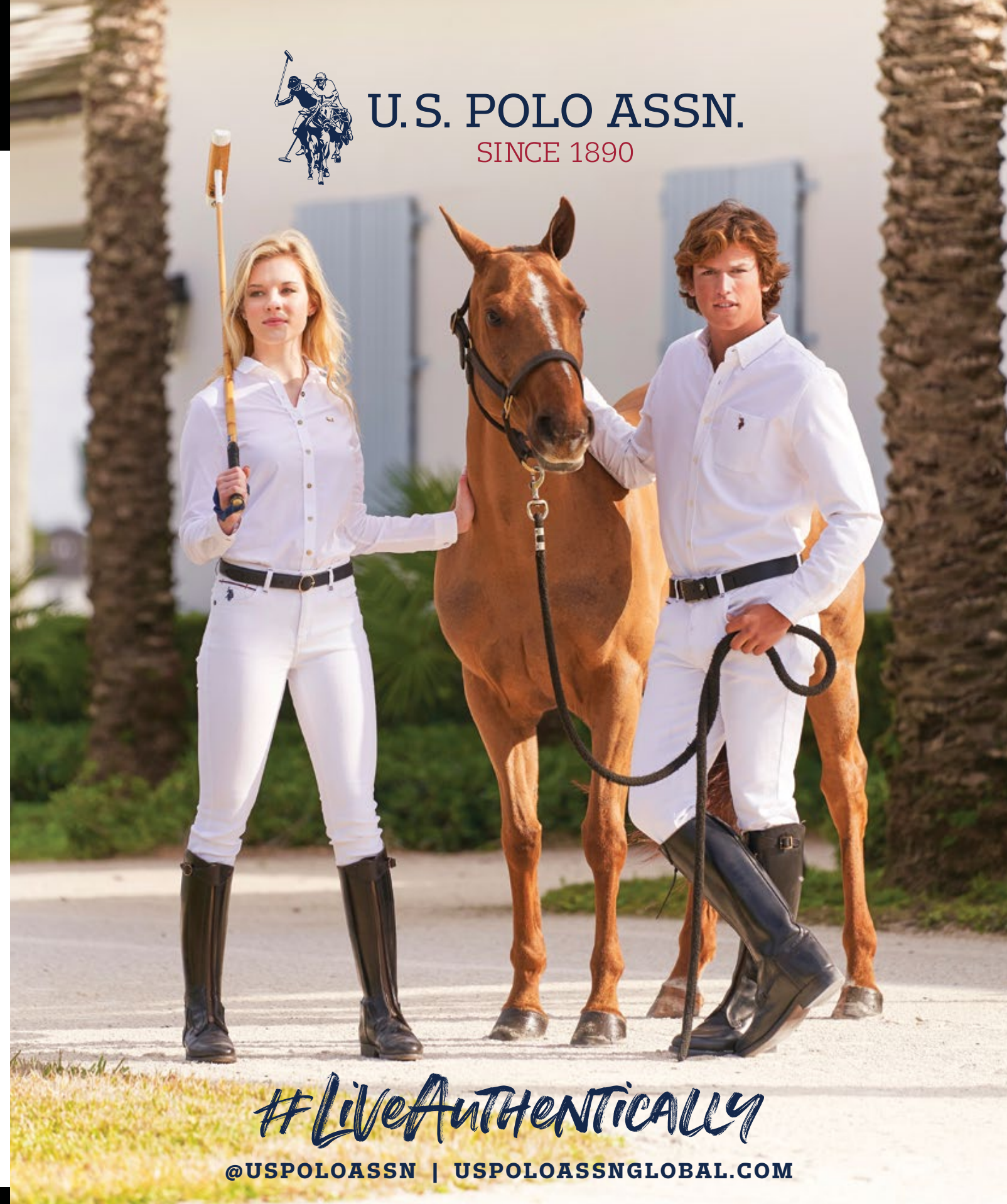
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