

THE WORLD'S ONLY GLOBAL RETAIL AND LEISURE MAGAZINE

RLI



RETAIL & LEISURE INTERNATIONAL

www.rli.uk.com

MARCH 2023 ISSUE 179

GLOBAL FOCUS

TCONCEPT STRIKING A PERFECT BALANCE

AUTHENTIC BRANDS GROUP
**Evolve, Transform
and Reimagine**

KIKO MILANO
**Italian Beauty
Goes Global**

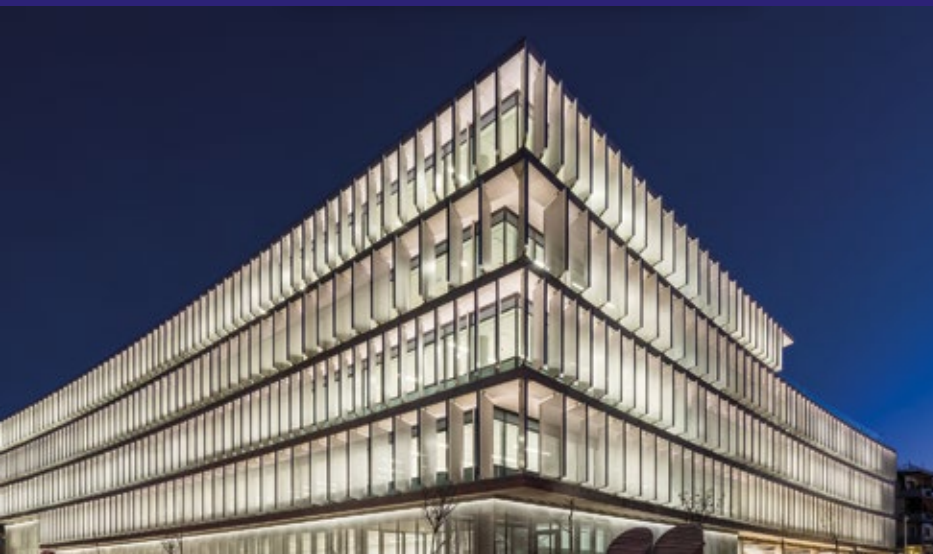
BANYAN TREE GROUP
**Awaken Your
Senses**

GLOBAL ARCHITECTURE & MASTERPLANNING | HACKETT LONDON | KSA & GIGA-PROJECTS | MIPIM INSIGHT | TIM HORTONS





GREECE



- One of the **best destinations** in the world
- Upscale hotel brands choose **Greece** for their presence
- “**Best Tourism Destination**” for 2022 for a second consecutive year at Global Traveler’s Annual Tested Reader Survey Awards
- Greece** is among the most mentioned countries in the western part of Europe that European and American consumers plan to visit in 2023, according to research by the **European Travel Commission (ETC)**
- Greece** was named one of the World’s Best Places to Retire in 2023, according to **International Living’s Annual Global Retirement Index**
- Investments in commercial real estate in the **Greek** market reached a record **1.65 billion euros in 2022**, marking a 40% increase compared to 2021
- Exceptional gastronomy and unique lifestyle
- Attractive asset prices and skilled workforce
- A range of investment opportunities

YOUR PLACE in the SUN

VISIT US AT
RIVIERA HALL
(R7.A3.)
and meet our top key players
in real estate.



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Cover Story

Based in the Netherlands, Tconcept are specialists in architecture, concept design and placemaking around the globe and their mission is to build places that are inviting and inspiring.



Editor's
Foreword

It already felt like the year was running away from us as we completed the final stages of this special MIPIM issue of RLI. It has been a fast start to 2023 for the RLI team and it continues with an edition that includes everything you need to know in the world of retail and leisure as the first round of major trade events this year take place in venues around the world. Take a moment to catch up on all the goings-on and we will back soon for the April issue.

Till next time...

James Quinn, Editor



Publisher's
Comment

Finally spring is in the air and our March issue is here... and that means one of our most sought after issues is out just in time for a busy event schedule, with a presence at three much anticipated events, The Retail Leaders Circle in Riyadh, The Retail Summit in Dubai and MIPIM in Cannes.

In this month's Cover Story, we take a trip to the Netherlands to visit Tconcept, specialists in architecture, concept design and placemaking around the globe. We take a look at some of their recently completed projects and explore their future goals.

Also this month, with immersive attractions and experiences revolutionising the world of retail, leisure and entertainment, we take a look at a concept that is enhancing the social experience, Immersive Gamebox, which utilises best-in-class technology to create social adventures in interactive smart rooms.

As well as our annual MIPIM Insight, we have a Voyager on KSA & Giga-Projects and a Special Feature on Architecture and Masterplanning, so enjoy the read! And don't forget to make sure you send in any last minute nominations for this year's prestigious Global RLI Awards 2023.

See you on my travels!

Jayne Rafter, Publisher

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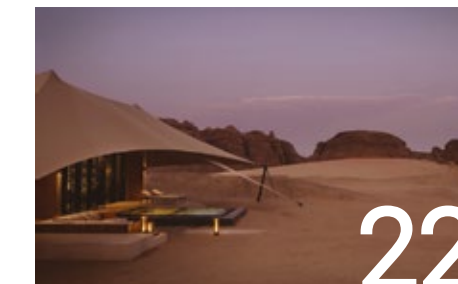
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WHO'S WHO IN RETAIL

RLI MEETS

Nurtac Afridi

CEO - GODIVA

Q. What are the company's key objectives for the next 12-18 months?

Our top priority as a business is opening more people's eyes to the wonder of GODIVA, whether they're customers, consumers, or talent. An important part of making this happen, at least for our customer and consumers, is through the expansion of relevant channels of distribution. We want to be everywhere our fans are, whether that's online, in the chocolate aisle of a drug store, e-commerce, fine retailers, or licensing to name a few.

Q. Would you say events around the world in the last few years have affected the business at all and has it had any effects on future plans?

It's safe to say that nearly all global companies have faced a variety of challenges over the past few years ranging from COVID-lockdowns in Greater China, economic uncertainty around the world and continued supply chain issues. And GODIVA is no exception. However, we are truly fortunate to see continuing growth across all our regions, despite these challenges. The last few years - while the human impact has been heartbreaking - have afforded us an opportunity to transform our business, thanks to the resiliency of our people.

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

I believe that regardless of industry, a leader must put their people first. Be thoughtful and intentional about investing in talent and have the foresight to include training to further their long-term development. In addition to making your organisation even stronger, this is one of the most important ways to motivate and inspire teams. It's essential for each person to feel valued, to understand how they contribute to your business and have a strong sense of being a part of something bigger than themselves.

Q. As a leader who makes key strategic decisions, do you prefer to rely on facts and figures, your natural instinct, or a combination of the two?

As a leader, I prefer to take a holistic approach to making strategic decisions that combines the natural instincts I've honed over my career as well as facts and figures. I will never make a significant decision without research, counsel from my executive committee, and reflection. With thousands of people depending on me for their livelihoods and nearly 100 years of brand legacy resting on my shoulders, there is too much at stake to go on instincts alone; and facts and figures can sometimes oversimplify a situation or remove the human element. So, I look to both.

Q. What do you make of social media and its importance in the world of retail and how prominent is e-commerce and online activities within the business?

Today, establishing a strong digital presence and strategy is an essential ingredient of any successful business plan. We have teams around the world who are dedicated to creating welcoming, engaging content to

win the hearts and minds of new consumers across all platforms, from Instagram to WeChat to TikTok. If a brand does not invest in this space, they'll quickly lose relevancy, especially with younger consumers. The growth of e-commerce - driven in part by the pandemic - radically altered the retail scene. We experienced unprecedented triple digit growth in e-commerce in 2020, which was subsequently followed with double digit growth in 2021. Meanwhile in 2022, Newsweek Magazine named Godiva.com as one of the Best Online Shops 2022 in Food Categories.

Q. Taking a step back from right now, what would you consider your career highlights to date to be?

Without a doubt, my career highlight to date is being tapped to become the Global CEO of GODIVA. Having the opportunity to lead this incredible brand, which is steeped in nearly 100 years of history, during an unprecedented time of transformation is truly the opportunity of a lifetime.

Q. With everything that has happened in recent times, how are you feeling about the 12-18 months that lie ahead?

More than anything else, I'm feeling excited! Our strategy to date has proven to be successful and we continue to see positive results. As I reflect upon last year's performance and recent successes, we are feeling confident about the road ahead of us. We continue to see positive trends and I know the changes we made to our business in 2022 will be setting us up for even greater successes in the 2023-2024 holiday season. I relish the opportunity to take on a new challenge and look forward to the many positive things at GODIVA - both new and in terms of expansion.

Q. Lastly, any final thoughts or anything else you would like to add for our readers?

We are a brand that is not only committed to spreading wonder through our products, but we are also a brand that is committed to providing a positive social impact to the world around us. For GODIVA, being a responsible corporate citizen is a way of doing business - going back to our foundation as a company that worked to bring joy to communities in Belgium after World War II. As the CEO of GODIVA, I have relished the opportunity and the responsibility to advance gender equality and advocate for women's empowerment. I am very proud of our signature social impact program, The Lady GODIVA Initiative, which reinforces our commitment to supporting women's empowerment and female entrepreneurship. Since the initiative's launch in 2021, we have been recognising female-forward NGOs around the world for the exemplary positive impact they are making in their communities. In addition to monetary support, we partner with each of these organizations so that GODIVA can provide a platform for their collective voices to be heard and help further their mission in uplifting women around the world. As you can see, making the world a more wonderful place is key to GODIVA's mission as a responsible corporate citizen. As I look at my global team, I am especially proud of our strong female representation in managerial roles worldwide. I know that to succeed as a global business, it's essential to have women wherever decisions are being made.

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REDEFINING THE OUTLET SHOPPING EXPERIENCE



DISCOVER 11 PREMIUM FASHION OUTLETS
IN EUROPE'S MOST EXCITING DESTINATIONS

AMSTERDAM PRAGUE GOTHENBURG SEVILLE LISBON WROCLAW MALLORCA ZURICH OSLO PORTO ZWEIBRÜCKEN



TECHNOGYM UNVEILS UK-FIRST EXPERIENTIAL RETAIL AT SELFRIDGES LONDON

The new space offers an ultimate wellness experience, including complimentary 30-minute fitness training sessions and the very latest home workout solutions available in London.

The elegant 44sq m retail space is located on the Lower Ground Floor and has been created to offer consumers the opportunity to discover the latest at-home fitness products, technologies, and services. Offering a personalised wellness experience, the store gives wellness-savvy shoppers access to experienced consultants for bespoke home-gym projects, free-of-charge – helping customers to create their home workout space.

Marking the glamorous opening event, the brand was joined by VIP and Fashion Designer Oliver Proudlock and model Emma Louise Connolly, who are both ambassadors for the brand.



LEADING UK RETAIL AND LEISURE DESTINATION TRAFFORD CENTRE IS DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE THE OPENING OF ITS NEWEST SPORTSWEAR STORE CASTORE. THE PREMIUM SPORTSWEAR BRAND IS CONTINUING TO DRIVE ITS PHILOSOPHY OF BETTER NEVER STOPS WITH THE LAUNCH OF ITS LATEST STORE AT THE MANCHESTER CENTRE. THE 1,200 SQ FT STORE IS LOCATED ON UPPER REGENT CRESCENT AND HOME TO CASTORE'S LUXURY SPORTSWEAR AND INNOVATION. THE STORE WILL FEATURE A VARIED RANGE OF PREMIUM SPORTSWEAR, INCLUDING BOTH MENS AND WOMENSWEAR, A SELECTION OF CASTORE TEAMWEAR AND THE NEW RED BULL REPLICA COLLECTION. FOUNDED IN 2015 BY BROTHERS TOM AND PHIL BEAHON, CASTORE WAS CREATED TO BRING A NEW LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE TO SPORTSWEAR.

SHELLEY SANDZER TO SERVE UP FIVE GUYS TO BRACKNELL

Specialist UK leisure and property agency, Shelley Sandzer, has secured a new site in Bracknell for premium burger brand Five Guys, as the restaurant continues its expansion across the UK.

Five Guys is set to open a 58-cover, 3,000sq ft restaurant at The Lexicon, a leading Berkshire destination and one of the UK's biggest town centre regenerations, moving into Bill's former unit at the scheme. Opening in May, Five Guys will serve up its renowned burgers, delivering quality, customisation and freshness, providing a takeaway and eat-in offering for locals and residents.

Shelley Sandzer has had a long-standing relationship with Five Guys since its inception, securing the brand's first UK site in Covent Garden back in 2013, as well as its 100th site in St Pauls in 2019. With over 150 sites in the UK, Five Guys in Bracknell will add to its Berkshire portfolio of restaurants, joining ever-popular nearby sites in Reading and Windsor.

The news follows a number of successful leasing deals for Shelley Sandzer over 2022, such as securing Yakiniku Like's first site in the UK.

ROXY LEISURE OPENS NEW ROXY BIRMINGHAM SITE

The second 'Booze & Ball Games' concept in Birmingham showcases an exclusive crazy pool course, two karaoke rooms, duck pin bowling and beer pong.

Positioned in 1 Victoria Square, previously the Kong site, the new Roxy Ball Room venue is located adjacent to Victoria Square, home to Birmingham's Town Hall, Museum and Art Gallery, Council House, and the city's yearly Frankfurt Christmas Market.

The competitive gaming concept continues to follow its signature 'Booze & Ball Games' mantra, where guests can experience activities including American pool, basketball, ping pong, shuffleboard and more.

The venue's most notable activities include two karaoke rooms, suitable for both small and larger groups, Roxy's exclusive crazy pool course, two duck pin bowling lanes and beer pong throughout. Alongside this, Roxy Ball Room Victoria Square has a food and drink offer that caters to all occasions including 'Roxy Signature' drinks and Roxy Dogs.

P-THREE APPOINTED TO LEASE ICONIC ARCELORMITTAL ORBIT

P-THREE, the specialist real estate agency and consultancy focused on mixed-use development and prime retail and leisure leasing, has been selected by the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) to lead on the leasing of the key restaurant and catering anchors on Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, including 15,800sq ft (GIA) of restaurant space at East Bank.

In addition, P-THREE has been appointed to secure operators for the ArcelorMittal Orbit, the UK's tallest sculpture and world's longest and tallest tunnel slide created by Anish Kapoor and Cecil Balmond and The Podium, a 14,105sq ft restaurant space.

P-THREE's appointment on the scheme follows its delivery of an in-depth Retail Vision strategy for Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park for LLDC.



FULL STEAM AHEAD FOR BUZZWORKS IN GREENOCK

One of Scotland's leading hospitality groups, Buzzworks Holdings, has received keys to its new coastal site at the recently constructed Greenock Cruise Ship Visitor Centre.

Following the success of popular venues Scotts Largs, Scotts Troon and Scotts Port Edgar, fitting works are now due to start on the company's highly-anticipated Scotts Greenock venue in the coming weeks, representing the family run business' first venture into Inverclyde and generating more than 70 new jobs for the local community.

The stunning coastal venue will feature a striking central bar, whilst the luxurious restaurant and show-stopping open-air roof top terrace will boast the most incredible views out on to the River Clyde.

Scotts will bring its brand of stylish coastal escapism to Greenock and guests will soon be able to enjoy everything from

classic fish and chips and mouth-watering burgers, to prime Scotch steaks and freshly landed langoustines cooked to perfection on the chargrill.

From the bar, Scotts will offer an impressive selection of wines and champagnes by the glass, not to mention an incredible cocktail selection prepared by some of the company's talented and award-winning mixologists.

Internationally acclaimed designer Jim Hamilton is leading the design of the project, which will see Buzzworks invest a sizeable seven-figure sum into the venue.

As works get underway on the upcoming Scotts Greenock, the family-owned Buzzworks will be offering a number of exciting jobs opportunities across the venue, both within the kitchen and front of house.

WINGSTOP TO ADD A NEW SITE

The company is opening its first standalone retail unit at Gallions Reach Retail Park in East London's Beckton. Lemon Pepper Holdings, which is the UK master franchisee and brand partner of the American chicken wing concept has acquired a former Bella Italia site at Gallions Reach. It will open either late this month or in early April.

SEVEN DIALS GROWS F&B OFFER

Shaftesbury has announced that Seven Dials is set to welcome Crudo Cevicheria, London's first build-your-own cevicheria this month. The restaurant, which will be located at 36 Monmouth Street, will feature its distinctive menu that spotlights the classic Peruvian dish. The site will be the brand's fourth, joining sites in Old Street, Hackney and Fitzrovia.

UNDERARMOUR SET TO EXPAND

The company is set to open three brand-owned stores in key cities throughout the UK over the next couple of months, following significant growth and consumer demand in the market. The stores are part of Under Armour's overall strategy to strengthen its direct-to-consumer channel, a key element of the brand's growth plan in the UK and wider EMEA region.

BLACK SHEEP COFFEE EXPANDS

Specialist coffee chain, Black Sheep Coffee, has selected centre:mk for the latest site in its growing portfolio. Set to open in May, the store will feature the brand's iconic cafe menu offering a signature range of 100 per cent specialty grade Robusta beans, Norwegian waffles, smoothies, shakes and light bites.

MANGO CHOOSES CENTRE:MK

Mango, one of Europe's leading fashion groups, has selected centre:mk, one of the top 10 retail and leisure destinations in the UK, for its latest location. The new store, which is set to open this summer, will have a selling space of over 4,500sq ft and it will exclusively distribute the Mango women's collection.



NEWMARK HDH SUPPORTS SKECHERS WITH ITS EXPANSION ACROSS EUROPE

London-based strategic retail property consultancy Newmark HDH has worked in partnership with US-based footwear brand Skechers to secure a raft of new stores across Europe. The expansion includes locations in Germany, France, Spain and Italy.

Newmark HDH has worked alongside Skechers for more than 15 years. The American lifestyle and performance footwear company founded in 1992, has expanded into more than 4,170 stores worldwide.

Ana Mendi, Director, Newmark HDH, commented: "We have a longstanding and successful relationship with Skechers, so we are delighted to help the iconic brand continue to expand into mainland Europe with the new stores in Italy, Germany, France and Spain."

The company now operates retail destinations across six continents and operates key European sites in locations such as Via del Corso in Rome.



EUROFUND GROUP, THE INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT COMPANY BEHIND NUMEROUS SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS IN CONTINENTAL EUROPE, HAS ANNOUNCED A NEW DEAL WITH UCI CINEMAS, AT UBBO IN LISBON. ONCE THE NEW CINEMA OPENS, AFTER ITS REFURBISHMENTS, UBBO WILL FURTHER ENHANCE ITS POSITION AS ONE OF THE MAIN LEISURE DESTINATIONS IN THE PORTUGUESE CAPITAL. LAUNCHING AT THE END OF SUMMER 2023, UCI LUXE AT UBBO'S SHOPPING RESORT, WILL BOAST MORE THAN 4,000SQ M, 11 EXCLUSIVE CINEMA PROJECTION ROOMS AND A TOTAL OF 981 SEATS. EACH SEAT WILL BE VIP, RECLINABLE AND SPACIOUS, WITH A PERSONAL TABLE AND MORE ROOM BETWEEN ROWS. ITS STUNNING LARGE SCREENS AND CUTTING-EDGE SOUND AND PROJECTION TECHNOLOGY WILL ENABLE A MULTI-SENSORY EXPERIENCE.

MELBOURNE WALK TO BOOST CBD RETAIL

Bourke Street Mall's new mixed-used development project – Melbourne Walk – is set to rejuvenate the city's CBD core with comprehensive retail and hospitality offerings, according to its developers. With construction ongoing, investment firm Steadfast Capital will turn the popular CBD arcade into a mixed-use retail and dual-branded hotel destination.

The site was formerly known as 'The Walk' and comprised eight buildings including Diamond House, Allan's Building, the Public Benefit Bootery and York Building.

"Melbourne Walk represents the next generation of Bourke Street Mall and will refresh the main retail core of the CBD and further enhance the city's retail-laneway network with the heavy shopper, office and student foot traffic daily," said Colliers' Adam Lester. "Over the next five years, the precinct will experience a dramatic revitalisation with major international retailers longing for a presence in prime Melbourne CBD entering the Melbourne market via Bourke Street Mall."

TOUS EXPANDS ITS NEW STORE MODEL

The brand has taken its new store model to the Rambla Catalunya in Barcelona and has unveiled the new design at 66 Rambla Catalunya. It is an establishment that incorporates the brand's latest business concept, which, according to what it says, "encourages customer autonomy and offers a new way of interacting with the product."

The open architecture, the "photo points" and the presence of stylists to advise the clientele are part of this store proposal. According to Anna Sió, Director of Brand Experience at Tous, the moment of purchase and everything that surrounds it "is one of the key points of our brand evolution, since it perfectly conveys how we understand our jewellery and accessories as allies for the self-expression and creativity of our customers".

The company has also taken into account sustainability criteria when developing this establishment. In this sense, it is committed to LED lighting, an air conditioning system that reduces energy consumption and local suppliers to minimise carbon dioxide emissions linked to transport.

SHOPPING CENTRES USED AS CENTRES OF RELIEF AFTER EARTHQUAKES IN TURKEY

After two devastating earthquakes with magnitudes of 7.9 & 7.7 on 6 February which effected 11 cities (the epicentre being in K. Maras and the surrounding cities of Hatay, Adiyaman, Malatya, G. Antep, Kilis, Osmaniye, Ş. Urfa, Adana, Diyarbakır and Elazığ) with a total population of 13.5 million citizens in the Southeastern part of Turkey. The death toll from the earthquakes has topped more than 40,000 lives and more than 100,000 injured. Over 230,000 buildings have been destroyed or damaged to an unlivable condition and need to be demolished immediately.

Avi Alkas, Chairman of Alkas Consulting said that during this time of turmoil, the 37 shopping centres of the region which remained standing with minor damages started to indeed serve as centres of relief after the terrible earthquakes. People are displaced from their homes and in need of access to essential daily water, food and medical supplies. Shopping centres are providing a centralised location for humanitarian aid distribution, with their large open spaces and some stores that can be used as distribution points. In addition to aid distribution, shopping centres are offering means for temporary shelter too. Some shopping centres with their large parking lots enable the construction of tents too, for people to stay in. These shopping centres are not only providing places for shelter to many victims in the cold winter nights, but also serving them hot food from their temporary portable field kitchens.

Shopping centres also serve as gathering places for people to come together and support each other during the crisis. They are also used as provisional communication and civil municipal centres where people can exchange information and make plans for recovery and rebuilding. After the urgent recovery support there are efforts to start using them as temporary educational facilities for school needs. Overall, our shopping



centres are playing an important role in providing relief and support in the aftermath of these terrible earthquakes.

After taking lessons from the calamity of these earthquakes, we need to consider new angles of constructing future shopping centres in the potential earthquake threat areas, explains Alkas.

It is also important to carefully consider locations for new shopping centres. The sites should be away from known geological hazard areas such as fault lines, liquefaction zones, or areas prone to landslides. Additionally, zoning regulations and building codes may have changed in the aftermath of the earthquake, so it's important to ensure that the proposed locations will be compliant with current regulations.

Alkas highlights that the design of the new shopping centres should also prioritise safety and resilience. Building codes and standards may have changed in the aftermath of such earthquakes, so it will be of utmost importance to ensure that new shopping centres, public buildings and related service areas would meet or exceed current standards. The buildings should also be designed to withstand potential future earthquakes, with features such as seismic bracing, reinforced masonry and flexible structural elements.

ECOALF OPENS MILAN FLAGSHIP

Not long after opening its Madrid shop in Caleido, the Spanish sustainable company has landed in the centre of Milan with a boutique located in Piazza Gae Aulenti. The 80sq m, one-storey Ecoalf flagship shop retails the Spanish brand's latest collections, including its range of clothing and footwear along with accessories.

MARIONNAUD ADDS CONCEPT

The perfumery brand Marionnaud has launched a new store concept called the Greener Store. Entirely redesigned, this 271sq m store combines eco-design, personalisation and services. The new unit has been opened at 4 Temps de la Défense shopping centre near Paris and continues the brand's recycling program that was initiated back in 2016.

MAJOR OUTLET IS SET TO GROW

Fashion House Group will start in Q2 of this year the construction of the second phase of Fashion House Outlet Centre Pallady, which is located in the eastern part of Bucharest. The company is set to invest around €45M in the expansion, which is the seventh of its kind developed by Liebrecht & wood and Fashion House Group across Europe.

MIXUE ADDS AUSTRALIA OUTLET

Chinese tea chain Mixue has launched in Australia, opening its first store in Sydney's World Square shopping centre. Two more locations are imminent in Brisbane and Melbourne. The Sydney store features floor-to-ceiling windows spanning an entire wall and red steel frames. The brand was founded in 1997.

DEAL AGREED BY COLLINS FOODS

Collins Food's wholly-owned Dutch subsidiary (Collins Foods Netherlands Operations) has entered into a share purchase agreement to acquire eight KFC restaurants in the Netherlands from R.Sambo Holding. Collins Foods MD & CEO Drew O'Malley said the acquisition is another "step forward" for their European growth strategy.



ONLINE BABY REGISTRY GIANT BABYLIST TO OPEN FIRST RETAIL STORE

An online registry that served over nine million new parents and gift-givers in 2022 is making its first permanent foray into brick-and-mortar.

Oakland, California-based Babylist will open an 18,000sq ft flagship this summer in Beverly Hills, California, in a space that formerly housed Anthropologie/BHLDN.

Babylist will offer an experiential and interactive experience that gives parents-to-be the opportunity to test-and-try products in a “celebratory” environment, the company said. The store will include such features as a “guided” registry experience, brand integrations, gift boutique and blended physical and digital content that helps customers understand products.

The flagship follows pop-ups called Cribs, that Babylist tested last year in both Los Angeles and New York City. The temporary outposts were only open for a couple of days.



ALO IS LAUNCHING AN IMMERSIVE DIGITAL VERSION OF ITS BRICK-AND-MORTAR ALO YOGA STORES THAT INCLUDES VIRTUAL REALITY (VR) COMPONENTS. THE DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER ACTIVEWEAR BRAND IS WORKING WITH METAVERSE PLATFORM OBSESS TO ROLL OUT THE VIRTUAL STORE. THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE INCLUDES DIGITAL STYLING CAPABILITIES, STREAMING BEAUTY AND WELLNESS TUTORIALS, VIRTUAL WORKOUT CLASSES THAT ARE TYPICALLY ACCESSIBLE TO PAID SUBSCRIBERS OF THE ALO MOVES FITNESS PLATFORM AND SEAMLESS CHECKOUT. CUSTOMERS CAN VIRTUALLY BROWSE, LEARN ABOUT AND SHOP ALO MERCHANDISE AND BUILD CUSTOM OUTFITS TO VISUALISE HOW DIFFERENT PRODUCTS WILL LOOK ON THEM. USERS CAN INTERACT WITH THE STORE ENVIRONMENT VIA DESKTOP, MOBILE OR THE META QUEST 2 VR HEADSET.

SUR LA TABLE IS PLOTTING MAJOR EXPANSION

Sur La Table is moving back into expansion mode nearly three years after it closed a good number of its stores.

The upscale kitchenware retailer plans to open four new locations by summer, with stores at Bayshore, an open-air centre in Glendale, Wisconsin; The Shops at Farmington Valley in Canton, Connecticut; and The Westchester in White Plains, New York. It will also open a location at Stuyvesant Plaza in Albany.

The upcoming openings follow Sur La Table's return to the markets of Omaha, Neb., and Alexandria, Va., in 2022 with new store openings.

“By expanding our retail footprint strategically, we’ve targeted specific markets providing new and familiar communities with a retail destination that offers the 50 years of cooking expertise that the brand is known for,” said Jordan Voloshin, CEO of Sur La Table. “We are enthusiastic about returning to locations where Sur La Table has previously operated in, as well as entering new markets and reaching new customers across the country.”

ESPRIT WORKING ON A COMEBACK IN THE US

A brand that once defined California cool is plotting its US comeback. It's also on the hunt for a world-class architectural firm to assist in modernising the brand's heritage.

Esprit said that it has signed a lease with Hudson Square Properties in New York City for what will become the company's new global creative headquarters. The deal includes more than 38,000sq ft across two floors at 160 Varick Street, which is situated in downtown Manhattan.

The offices will serve as the headquarters for the brand's global design, branding, creative and marketing efforts. While Esprit's global headquarters will remain based in Hong Kong, the NYC space signals the brand's return to the US. Esprit was founded in 1968, in San Francisco.

In a statement, Esprit CEO William Pak, who took the reins of the company in March 2022, said the decision to move the creative headquarters to New York City was done as the brand looks “to resonate with a global audience.”

NEW BALANCE DEBUTS NEW STORE CONCEPT IN BOSTON

New Balance has gone customer-centric in its hometown.

The athletic footwear giant has opened a new retail concept on Boston's Newbury Street that puts people - as opposed to products - at the centre of the consumer experience. The Boston outpost is the second of its kind globally, with the first opening in Guangzhou, China in December last year.

Designed around a central seating area, the store aims to encourage customers to come together and find their authentic style, the company said.

The new concept features an edited assortment of products. Visual storytelling accompanies select products, highlighting the makers and origins behind the items and illuminating New Balance at the intersection of sport and culture.



DAVE AND BUSTERS BRINGS THE FUN TO THE METAVERSE

Dave & Buster's Entertainment Inc. is offering an interactive customer experience on a popular immersive gaming platform.

The entertainment/restaurant chain is opening “Dave & Buster's World” on the Roblox gaming platform. This metaverse environment enables visitors to play a variety of multi-user games, as well as unlock hidden “secret experiences.”

Dave & Buster's World includes virtual versions of all the attractions from a brick-and-mortar Dave & Buster's restaurant. Users can purchase power drinks for greater speed, strength, and skill in arcade games, while The Winner's Circle, Dave & Buster's prize shop, has been recreated in the metaverse.

Metaverse customers can also trade in their tickets for in-game customizations like trails and descriptors, or purchase premium

add-ons that enable them to personalise their experience through features such as outfits, pets and accessories. The company has worked with agency partner Camelot Strategic Marketing & Media and Roblox developer Melon to create this new metaverse experience.

“Dave & Buster's is the pioneer in midway and arcade games,” said Chris Morris, CEO at Dave & Buster's. “That creativity and innovative spirit continues to drive us to explore new ways to expand our leadership in interactive experiences for our customers. I am excited for Dave & Buster's to enter this rapidly growing digital space with Dave & Buster's World.”

Founded in 1982, the business is headquartered in Coppell, Texas and operates over 200 venues under the two brands Dave & Buster's and Main Event.



SHOWCASE IN RAPID EXPANSION

The retailer Showcase, which bills itself as “home of the hottest trends,” has opened its 150th store which is located in Huntington Station in New York. In the last six months the brand has completed the largest and single expansion in its 29-year history, opening 31 stores across 13 states in the Northeast region of the US.

WAREHOUSE RETAILER GROWS

BJ's Wholesale Club is adding to its footprint in the Sunshine State. The Massachusetts-based membership warehouse club retailer has opened a store in Davenport, Florida. It is the company's 36th store in the state and means there is now a total of 236 sites across the US. The new club opens as the brand continues its expansion beyond its Eastern home base.

COEN MARKETS TO ADD UNITS

The convenience and fuel retailer is enabling shoppers to pay for purchases without needing to stand in line or scan their items. Coen Markets Inc. is launching two checkout-free stores in partnership with frictionless shopping startup Grabango at stores in Oakdale and Southpark, both of which are in Pennsylvania.

BOSCOV'S TO HIT A MILESTONE

The family-owned business has announced the signing of the lease on the chain's milestone 50th store, at Meadowbrook Mall in Bridgeport, West Virginia. The unit is the company's first in West Virginia, whilst the other 49 can be found in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Ohio.

CHIPOTLE TO LAUNCH FARMESA

Chipotle's Mexican Grill is set to launch a “California-inspired fresh eatery” concept. The quick-serve restaurant company has said it is opening a new brand, called Farmesa, at Third Street Promenade in Santa Monica, California. The concept is set to have a soft opening with a reduced menu before its opening later this month.

UAE-BASED HOMEGROWN BRAND ELLI JUNIOR OPENS FLAGSHIP STORE IN DUBAI MALL

UAE-based home-grown children's retailer Elli Junior has opened a flagship store in Dubai Mall. Located on the second floor of the mall the new store is spread across 70sq ft and sports a contemporary look and feel.

"We plan to open more stores in prime locations such as Dubai Mall and Reem Mall in Abu Dhabi to get closer to our customers. I strongly believe in a hybrid approach to reach consumers through their preferred touchpoints," said Founder & CEO Elli Kasbi during an exclusive interview with RetailME.

One of our major milestones is the fact that we've doubled our turnover every year since launch. Over the past four years Elli Junior has grown 100% year-on-year on sales. We've expanded our reach online, coupled with building presence in luxury department stores and popular malls. In addition, we've also built a community website in Arabic."



MAJID AL FUTTAIM HAS LAUNCHED THE MASSIVE SNOW PARK IN OMAN AND THE 14,830SQ M DESTINATION IS SAID TO BE THE LARGEST INDOOR SNOW PARK IN THE MENA REGION. MAJID AL FUTTAIM HAS SAID THAT THE PARK IS ITS THIRD IN THE REGION, FOLLOWING SKI DUBAI AND SKI EGYPT. IT ADDED THAT THE PROJECT UNDERLINES ITS COMMITMENT TO DELIVERING INNOVATIVE EXPERIENCES FOR GUESTS ACROSS THE REGION. SNOW OMAN FEATURES MORE THAN 20 FAMILY-FRIENDLY RIDES AND ATTRACTIONS FEATURING A 430M ICE RINK, AS WELL AS A PENGUINARIUM. STORYTELLING IS INTEGRATED INTO THE EXPERIENCE, WHICH HAS A 'DESERT BLIZZARD' THEME AND RESEMBLES AN IMAGINARY WORLD WHERE OMAN'S CITYSCAPES AND DUNES ARE COVERED IN REAL SNOW, WHILST STILL REFLECTING THE LOCAL CULTURE AND HERITAGE.

MEGA 'NATURE' ISLAND UNVEILED IN ABU DHABI

Mohamed Alabbar is to launch a spectacular new \$3.5bn island project off the coast of Abu Dhabi, Arabian Business has revealed. The project, known as Ramhan Island, will feature 1,800 beach villas, 1,000 branded residences, a hotel and marina. The Emaar Founder and Americana Chairman is developing it through his privately owned Eagle Hills development company.

The already existing island is located 20 minutes from the shores of mainland Abu Dhabi. Once developed it will include a "world-class marina" with state-of-the-art shopping and fine dining, a luxury hotel and floating villas. A total of eight different villa designs and layouts are being rolled out, varying in size from 2,862sq ft to 7,539sq ft.

"It's a rare thing to live on a natural island, complete with a beach – everything being truly from nature, including dolphins, turtles and birds. This is a quality of life that has never been seen before, and it is what we will be delivering – I have been lucky enough to work on some unique projects over the years, but this is something truly special," he told Arabian Business.

NEW WAITROSE DUBAI MALL STORE REVEALED

Waitrose & Partners UAE has renovated its 45,770sq ft Dubai Mall store located on the ground floor. The revamped store sports several new features including the grocer's first 'Shawarma Station' serving up marinated chicken and beef wraps.

For meat connoisseurs the store's first-ever 'Smoke House' offers a wide range of smoked delicacies, including spatchcock chicken (peri-peri or lemon-garlic), hot pastrami and brisket brioche sandwiches.

The 'Make Your Own' salad and sandwich counters are packed with fresh ingredients for customers to create their own dishes, in addition to ready-made signature options. The store also features a smoothie and juice bar.

Meanwhile, homeware enthusiasts can browse the newly expanded selection of kitchen, dining and home accessories, including John Lewis products. There's also the store's gifting and floristry counter where shoppers can build a bouquet of elegant flowers and stems.

GEOX RENEWS PARTNERSHIP TO EXPAND STORE NETWORK

Italian fashion & footwear brand Geox is expanding its presence in the GCC through a strengthened strategic partnership with Beside Group, a distributor of international fashion brands in the Middle East.

Beside has been the exclusive Geox retailer and distributor in the region since 2020 and has collaborated with the Italian brand to develop a robust business plan. Currently, Geox has 13 mono-brand stores located across key malls in the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

Encouraged by the success of their existing stores – as Geox generated €10M worth of revenue in the region – the partners have decided to renew the agreement and extend it for another 10 years during which they plan to expand the store network to 25 by 2027.



SAUDI ARABIA ANNOUNCES WORLD'S LARGEST EVER DOWNTOWN IN RIYADH

Saudi Arabia will soon be home to the world's largest modern downtown in Riyadh, titled New Murabba, the Kingdom's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, Prime Minister has announced.

The project is scheduled to be completed by 2030 and will add on to the kingdom's roster of 15 upcoming megaprojects, set to transform the nation. The launch of the New Murabba Development Company (NMDC) aims to develop the world's largest modern downtown in Riyadh, which will contribute to the city's future development in line with Saudi Vision 2030, the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported.

The launch of NMDC is part of PIF's strategy to increase local content, enable the private sector and contribute to the development of real estate projects and the local infrastructure, while diversifying

sources of income for the Saudi economy. The project is expected to add \$48bn to non-oil GDP and create 334,000 direct and indirect jobs by 2030.

New Murabba will feature eco-friendly zones, walking and cycling paths and over 80 entertainment and culture venues. Spread across an area of 19sq km at the intersection of King Salman and King Khalid roads, the development will boast 104,000 residential units, 9,000 hotel rooms and 980,000sq m of retail space. In addition, the development will include more than 1.4 million square metres of office space, 620,000sq m of leisure assets and 1.8 million square metres of community facilities.

Residents can expect a 15-minute walking radius and an internal transport system for easy access to the various amenities and it is just a 20-minute drive to the airport.



MALL OF MUSCAT ADDS UNITS

From coffee chains to premium fragrances and jewellery, several brands including Costa Coffee, Amouage, Pure Gold as well as budget concept Family Outlet Store opened in Oman's Mall of Muscat. Moving forward, more F&B brands and entertainment concepts are scheduled to open in the mall.

NEW HOTEL TO OPEN NEXT YEAR

Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, the world's leading luxury hospitality company is expanding its presence in the Middle East alongside Saudi-based investment firm Midad Real Estate. Together, they will introduce Four Seasons Hotel and Private Residences Jeddah at the Corniche, a new-build coastal retreat scheduled to open next year.

JOE & THE JUICE SET TO GROW

Danish healthy-eating lifestyle brand Joe & The Juice with more than 300 locations in 16 countries has revealed its growth strategy for the UAE. Operated by Lavoya Restaurant Group in the region, Joe & The Juice is set to open new stores, coupled with the launch of its delivery app. The brand launched in the region back in September 2022.

FLAGSHIP LAUNCHES IN DUBAI

The world-renowned franchise Kenny Rogers Roasters recently marked its brand presence in Dubai. The company, which is known for its rotisserie-roasted chicken, Kenny Rogers Roasters is a casual dining restaurant that opened its doors to its first flagship restaurant in the UAE with an outlet in Deira.

NOON.COM ACQUIRES NAMSHI

Regional e-commerce titan noon.com has completed the acquisition of the online fashion platform Namshi. With this purchase, Namshi is now a part of noon's digital ecosystem and the latter will continue to support Namshi's growth as an independent entity within the company. Namshi has been operating since 2011.

CR LAND'S MIXC SUNGANG BY IO DESIGN REDEFINES THE RETAIL-GASTRONOMIC EXPERIENCE

International architecture practice IO Design (part of Egis Group) has successfully converted a former warehouse site into a retail-gastronomy destination, marking an important milestone for the ongoing transformation of the Sungang industrial area.

IO Design was commissioned to reimagine the site into a 78,890sq m retail and F&B space topped with two Grade-A office towers. As part of the urban regeneration plan, the masterplan also includes residential and serviced apartment towers, resettlement housing and public amenities.

Jointly led by two Design Principals, Ted Givens and Chin Yong Ng, the concept for this new development breaks away from the conventional shopping mall design and instead draws inspiration from a traditional market square, creating a vibrant central meeting place for the community.



OMEGA HAS OPENED ITS NEWEST FLAGSHIP BOUTIQUE AT CITY OF DREAMS, MACAU, WHICH SERVES AS ONE OF THE LARGEST LOCATIONS FOR THE SWISS WATCHMAKER IN ASIA. SPANNING 450SQ M, THE NEW WATCH BOUTIQUE HAS BEEN DESIGNED TO BLEND "MODERN SIMPLICITY WITH OBJECT D'ART FROM THE BRAND'S LONG HISTORY, MAKING FOR A ONE-OF-A-KIND SHOPPING EXPERIENCE. THE SPACE BOASTS A LOUNGE AREA ON A MEZZANINE, WHICH IS REACHED VIA A GOLDEN CURVED STAIRCASE, ALONGSIDE SOFT LIGHTING, GOLDEN ORNAMENTS AND BRIGHT SHOWCASES WHERE PRODUCTS ARE DISPLAYED. THE KEY PIECE IS THE FIVE-METRE-TALL GOLDEN ASTRONAUT STATUE STANDING AT THE CENTRE OF THE BOUTIQUE, LINKING THE BOUTIQUE TO OMEGA'S HISTORY OF SPACE EXPLORATION.

STARBUCKS EYES EXPANSION ACROSS ASIA

Starbucks is ramping up its expansion plan in the Asia Pacific region, revealing plans to open 400 additional stores this year alone.

The expansion will include new cities and outside of major metropolitan areas in markets such as Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. In Laos, where it first opened its doors in November in the capital city of Vientiane, Starbucks also plans to open a new store this year. The rollout plans exclude the company's Chinese and Japanese operations. Meanwhile, in India, Starbucks plans to build on its existing portfolio of more than 300 stores by expanding into at least five new cities.

In South Korea, the US-headquartered coffee chain has introduced a 500sq m thrive-thru store in the business district of Gwangyang-si, marking its 5,000th location in the region (excluding China and Japan). "Our store in Asia Pacific is a drive-thru store that speaks both to the changing habits of our customers and of our determination to meet them where it is most convenient, while still offering the Starbucks connection," said Emmy Kan, President of Starbucks Asia Pacific.

SHISEIDO LAUNCHES NARS IN INDIA

The Japanese cosmetics giant Shiseido has announced the launch of its New York-headquartered makeup brand Nars Cosmetics to India via a strategic distribution partnership agreement with Global SS Beauty Brands Limited, which is a subsidiary of Shoppers Stop Limited.

Via the Nars India debut, Shiseido said it aims to strengthen its prestige skin beauty brand portfolio and accelerate growth in the Asia-Pacific region, a step with which the company hopes to satisfy the diverse beauty needs of Indian consumers. Linking with Shoppers Stop, a retailer with a strong focus on beauty and with an extensive network and omnichannel presence, Shiseido will further expand its presence in India, it said.

"To realise continuous growth and shift to a high-profit structure through active investment, the company will establish a foundation for business in promising future markets as part of core initiatives in Asia-Pacific region," the company added in a statement.

ISSEY MIYAKE UNVEILS A NEW FLAGSHIP SITE IN GINZA

Japanese luxury brand Issey Miyake has opened a new Tokyo flagship, located in the capital's trendy Ginza district.

Dubbed 'Issey Miyake Ginza / 442', the new store is named after its new address and is located just around the corner of the Issey Miyake store on Gasuto Dori Street. Spanning four levels, the new store is inspired by "the sophistication and the playfulness of Ginza."

Designed by Japanese designer and artist, Tokujin Yoshioka, the store space integrates solid aluminum panels into its minimalist design, to reflect the design elements of the label's aesthetic.

There is also a new gallery space called Cube, that exhibits work of not only Issey Miyake brands but also other practices of design, arts and crafts.



FENDI OPENS TWO NEW FLAGSHIPS IN SEOUL AND TOKYO

Fendi has opened two new flagship stores in Asia; one is in Japan and the other is in South Korea.

Dubbed 'Palazzo Fendi Omotesando', the new Japanese store is located in Tokyo's Omotesando district, and embraces the Fendi universe, where the full women's and men's collections are showcased "in a grandeur that brings Rome to Tokyo," according to the luxury brand.

The store was designed by Fendi's architecture department and spans more than 9,230sq ft over three floors. The store carries Fendi Casa and the brand's home decor and lifestyle accessories collection and special design pieces by Arno Declercq and Roberto Sironi, in addition to its men's, women's, furs, leather goods and accessories collections.

Likewise, Fendi opened its first flagship

boutique in Seoul, South Korea recently.

Dubbed 'Palazzo Fendi Seoul', the boutique is located in Cheongdam-dong and spans over 750sq m with a façade echoing Fendi's headquarters in Rome.

The first Seoul store for the brand boasts a 52ft high facade made up of stainless steel and central glass windows. It also houses LED arches, a Fendi signature riffing on the company's headquarters in Rome's Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana.

Spanning four floors, each level is designed with different marble, corresponding to the metal cuts on the facade, ranging from the Arabescato Vagli, to the Patagonia Black and White, or the Blue Roma with its light green and camel shades and the powerful Crystal Blue marble. The marble is contrasted against rough cement columns and beams, champagne metal and steel.

KIEHL'S UNVEILS INDORE UNIT

The brand has opened an exclusive store in Indore and with it makes its entry into the Central India market. With this expansion, Kiehl's enters the Central India market for the first-time, indicating the region's demand and potential for evidence and science-based skincare, according to the statement released by the company.

PLANET BUDDIES SET FOR ASIA

The European-based sustainable kids brand Planet Buddies has chosen Asia as its next potential market after launching in Europe and the UK three years ago. The mission of the brand is to inform children about the problems that put animals in danger of extinction while also working to increase global awareness of endangered species.

DISTRIBUTION DEAL GETS INKED

TH International Limited, operator of Tim Hortons coffee shops in China, has announced that its board of directors has approved a deal to develop Popeyes in mainland China and Macau. In the all-share transaction, Tims China has acquired the exclusive rights to develop and sub-franchise the Popeyes brand in the two markets.

EXPANSION FOR BURGER SINGH

Burger Singh is the quintessential Indian success story. In nine short years, the brand has rapidly made its mark on the Indian fast food industry. They now have over 100 stores in more than 50 cities and they are the fastest-growing burger chain of Indian origin and have the country's third highest burger delivery volumes.

SIFT & PICK IS SET FOR GROWTH

The company has launched its first brick-and-mortar site in Malaysia and it is situated on the first floor of Mid Valley Megamall in Kuala Lumpur. It means Malaysian fans no longer have to fly to Changi Airport to shop for the brands. The omni-channel fashion platform has installed a simple and contemporary retail design that features white as the primary colour.

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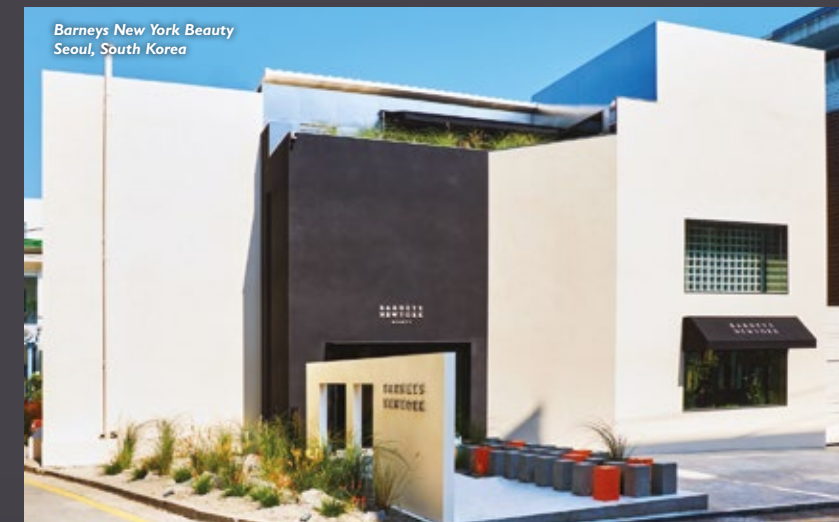
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Nautica, Dubai Hills Mall
Dubai, UAE



Reebok Design Group
Boston, Massachusetts, US



Barneys New York Beauty
Seoul, South Korea

Evolve, Transform and Reimagine



Established in 2010 by Founder, Chairman and CEO Jamie Salter in partnership with Leonard Green and Partners, Authentic Brands Group has evolved from a house of brands to a diverse and multifaceted platform of consumer verticals, value driving business models and global brands. Here, RLI spends some time with Nick Woodhouse, President and Chief Marketing Officer of Authentic, to discuss the continuing momentum of the company and how they are set to maintain this in the future.

The mission of Authentic is to evolve, transform and reimagine global brands through innovative business models, powerful storytelling, compelling content and immersive experiences. It builds long-term value for its brands around the world by partnering with best-in-class manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers.

Its portfolio includes more than 40 entertainment and lifestyle brands including Elvis Presley, David Beckham, Shaquille O'Neal, Ted Baker, Brooks Brothers, Nautica, Reebok, Sports Illustrated and Barneys New York.

Today the business has a global reach with offices in London, Los Angeles, Mexico, Miami, New York City and Shanghai that are dedicated to supporting and driving growth in key regions including the US and Canada, LATAM, EMEA and APAC.

"Authentic is a brand owner and multifaceted lifestyle and entertainment platform with vast reach and presence," explains Nick Woodhouse, President and Chief Marketing Officer of Authentic Brands Group. "Our brands generate upwards of \$24bn in global

annual retail sales and have an expansive retail footprint in more than 150 countries, including more than 9,800 freestanding stores and shop-in-shops and 355,000 points of sale. As a licensing business focused on brand identity, we partner with best-in-class manufacturers and operators who strategically support brand growth across key industry verticals, territories and product categories."

As the conversation moves onto the upcoming development pipeline, Woodhouse highlights that their acquisition strategy is focused on brands and opportunities that exhibit meaningful, organic growth potential and are synergistic to their existing portfolio. They are looking at their audiences and their habits to determine crossover and the opportunities to create synergies among their brands that are truly open-ended.

"In 2023, retail will be about evolution and transformation. Our proven playbook continues to create entries into new verticals and categories within our current portfolio, while uncovering strategic opportunities to bring additional brands onto our platform."

An example of this is in the scaling of the Metaverse with the Forever 21 "Shop City" on Roblox, which is a game available in the Roblox metaverse video game platform, which sees about 58.8 million active users every day. When Forever 21 celebrated its one year "Metaversary" in November last year, they launched the first metaverse-tested fashion collection inspired by the virtual goods worn by their avatars in "Shop City". Through this launch, Forever 21 and Virtual Brand Group have created an entirely new way to innovate, design and retail fashion globally.

Embracing the pivotal role that social media plays in marketing in today's world, the Authentic marketing team drives brand storytelling across all consumer touchpoints, platforms and emerging media. They develop original, branded content and dynamic advertising campaigns for earned, owned and paid distribution channels.

Woodhouse explains that they leverage the power of their combined following of more than 453 million across their portfolio of 40-plus brands. By examining the data that comes from their brand audiences, they can strategically determine how to market their brands through their owned channels and stay on top of the most relevant and impactful influencers and trends.

"Our teams have their fingers on the pulse of social media, especially TikTok, where new influencers are popping up all the time. We recently partnered with Alix Earle for Forever 21. She's the new it girl. She was recognised by our team and the partnership was executed quickly. Not only is she the face of our Forever 21 festival season campaign on TikTok, we were also able to integrate her into our platform, with Alix

joining us for Big Game Weekend events," says Woodhouse.

Along with social media, sustainability is another key area for Authentic as they believe that many consumers nowadays – particularly Gen Zers – are looking for more sustainable solutions and consider ethical practices before making a purchase.

The company recently entered into a partnership with the world's largest international advocacy organisation, Global Citizen, to amplify its ESG goals and drive awareness and action around environmental and social issues. Through this partnership, Authentic and Global Citizen are not only breaking new ground, but also leveraging and building upon their respective expertise in the fashion, retail and social impact spaces.

Authentic has also established a task force to help drive sustainability across their global brands and businesses. The Sustainability Alliance platform is designed to engage, educate and equip their partner network with the shared tools and resources to scale sustainable brand innovation, value creation and positive environmental impact.

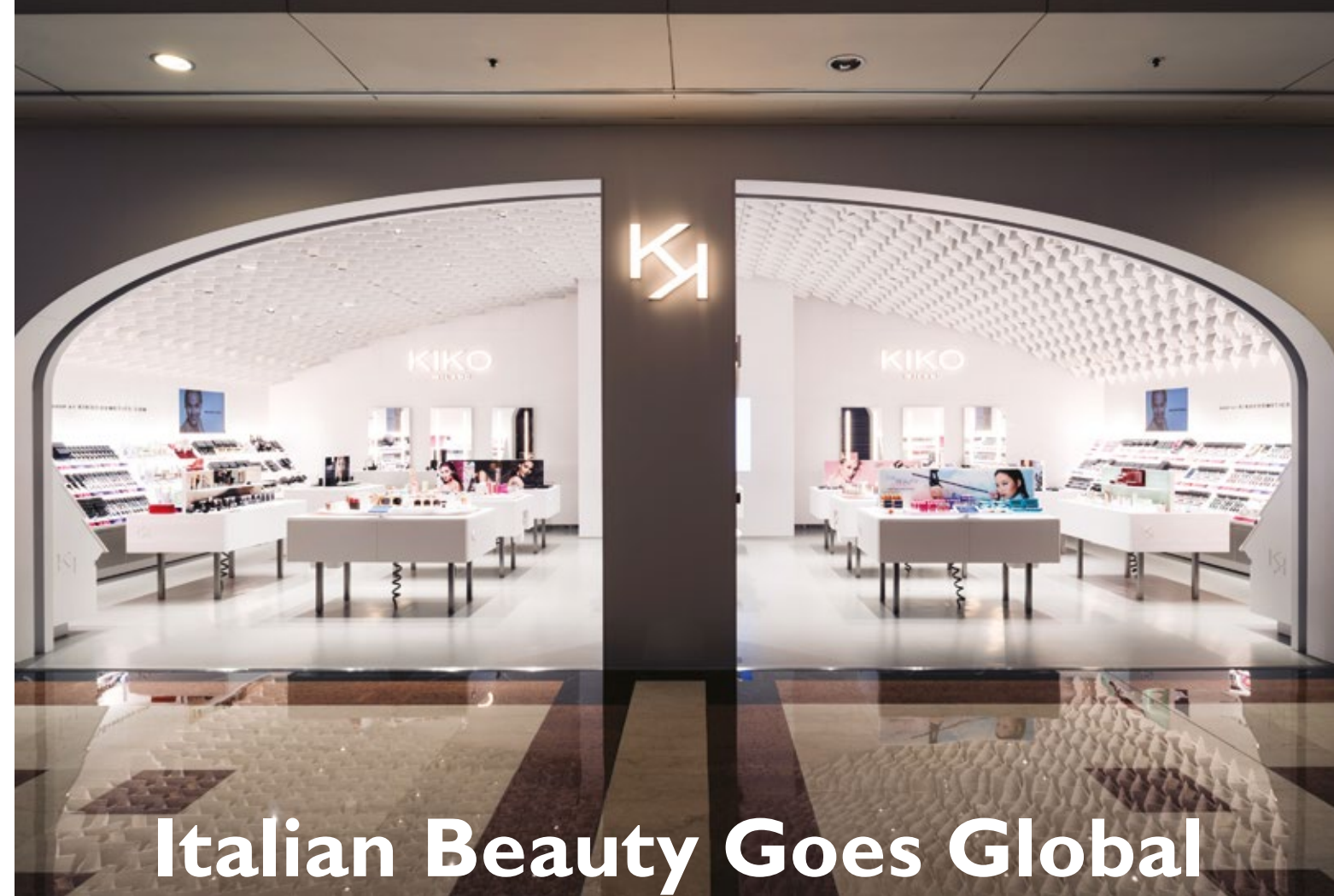
So, looking at the company as a whole, what does Woodhouse consider to be the reason the business has enjoyed monumental success in recent years and what makes them stand out?

"We combine the operational and financial benefits of a traditional brand licensor with the brand development, marketing and long-term value approach employed by the world's most successful brands."

As Woodhouse looks to the future of the company, he highlights that the partnership with David Beckham marks a definitive step in Authentic's global strategy to expand its corporate footprint, launch new business verticals and drive growth in key territories, including EMEA and APAC.

Meanwhile back in October they completed the acquisition of distinctive British lifestyle brand Ted Baker, which is in line with their strategic focus on growing and diversifying the portfolio through the acquisition of brands that originate from outside of the US.

"We are more than a licensing company; we are a lifestyle, entertainment and media platform fuelled by our portfolio of iconic and world-renowned brands. There isn't a single company out there that we can point to as a true competitor. We continue to push the boundaries of what brands can be through our innovative partnerships and category expansions and we continue to look at acquiring brands that have the legs to expand into new territories and markets," Woodhouse concludes.



Italian Beauty Goes Global

KIKO Milano was born in the very city that is part of its brand name, Milan. More than a quarter century later the company continues forward with the idea that makeup should enable all women to express their own individuality. In this interview, we spend some time with CEO Simone Dominici to discuss the evolution of the company and what the next stages are in its development.

Since its launch in 1997 the business has grown to provide the widest cosmetics assortment in the sector as well as expanding into other categories such as skin care. The company offers an outstanding in-store experience across all their stand-alone stores and beauty products with high quality standards at the most accessible prices.

The company closed out 2022 with just over 1,000 stores after adding 60 new units last year as well as growing its reach into ten new markets across the Middle East, North Africa, South East Asia and the Americas, meaning they now have a presence in 62 markets throughout the world.

Even in the time since this interview took place and you reading it now, the CEO explains that they will have no doubt added a few more stores as they continue to expand, with the five-year goal being to add 400 additional mono-brand stores and an additional 1,000 doors across selective beauty retailers.

KIKO Milano recently opened store number 1,000 in Dubai, with the Middle

East being a key growth driver for them and a region where they plan to nearly double their presence this year to 140 stores. They also jumped across two oceans to reach the Philippines where they have also recently opened and have a strong growth plan in place. They will continue to expand across multiple markets in 2023 and have planned openings scheduled for Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas.

As a company that is always looking to the future, the primary focus at the moment is on transforming KIKO Milano from a multi-regional beauty retailer into a global beauty brand, which Dominici believes is its natural evolution. It is already at the heart of the Italian beauty industry, which while providing over 55 per cent of the world's best cosmetic products to brands all over the world, has not had the same global brand impact some of their larger competitors have.

"We plan to change that, because KIKO Milano is representative of one of the most recognisable beauty cultures in the

world – Italy," explains Simone Dominici, CEO of KIKO Milano. "This is a territory where Italians have excelled for millennia, we don't just understand beauty, we know how to compose beauty from a diversity of elements that is usually unachievable – but in Italy we know how to do this. It is what we do, every day, in almost everything. We offer this to our customers, the options, the services, the understanding that allows them to be endlessly innovative and make beauty happen effortlessly."

The unrivalled technical mastery in the Italian cosmetics and skin care industry allows KIKO Milano to develop high quality products that address all imaginable customer needs, while their capacity to continuously reinvent and reimagine colour combinations, new colours, textures and packaging allows them to offer almost boundless creative options for their customers.

"It is a partnership with our customer, where we give them the tools to make beauty something bespoke to them and universally loved. We can do this by having the right mix of product assortment, creative inspiration through our social media channels and instore beauty expertise," says Dominici.

Following 26 years of growth and of offering leading expertise in its field, KIKO Milano is today a force to be reckoned with both offline and online in the world of social media. They are the only non-celebrity beauty brand that has engagement levels and follower growth that rivals that of celebrity brands and digital natives. The core of their strategy is to inspire, as if they were an influencer, through arrestingly beautiful content that drives excitement and then they let their community express their own vision via their own content – which they also often feature.

Meanwhile in the realm of sustainability, the brand is also transforming its internal operations through a unified commerce strategy, which will not only integrate all processes facing the customer, but also allow them to tailor and address each customer's needs to a near bespoke service and product offer. Their unified commerce transformation is already on the way and they expect it to be fully operational by the end of the year.

KIKO Milano has evolved since inception to offer a very inclusive

and complete beauty experience. It is not just about offering amazing products, immersive stores, beauty services and constant consumer inspiration. It is instead the sum of all these things in a friendly environment that is highly accessible for all, Dominici tells us.

Following this explanation, we ask the CEO what then the overall ethos of the business is?

"Part of our transformation into a global beauty brand involves updating many elements of our marketing and brand identity, but in terms of 'ethos', this comes from the term for customary, which goes back to our tradition of inclusivity. I would reiterate our founder's concept of 'Be what you want' as the underlying ethos to everything we do at KIKO Milano."

Discussing the future and the major challenges for the brand, Simone highlights that managing exponential growth is always a challenge, even if it is a welcome one. He feels that there are many global headwinds, but they are confident that they can overcome these and continue their planned growth.

KIKO Milano is another form of luxury, one that inspires people to be themselves instead of aspiring to be someone else, by remaining inclusive and accessible to all and we want to continue inspiring people as we maintain our growth," Dominici concludes.



Banyan Tree Veya
Phuket, Thailand

Awaken Your Senses



Founded in 1994, Banyan Tree Group has grown into one of the world's leading independent, multi-branded hospitality groups with a purpose-driven approach centred on wellbeing and sustainability. In this interview RLI sits down with Eddy See, President and CEO of Banyan Tree Group to discuss how the company's core values remain imperative to their purpose and their ongoing expansion.

For thousands of years, the banyan tree has been the sacred centre of many Asian villages, a shelter for weary travellers seeking refuge and sanctuary in the company of fellow wanderers. This is the inspiration that led to the birth of the brand in 1994 - a pioneer in naturally luxurious and ecologically sensitive hospitality.

The diverse portfolio of Banyan Tree Group centres around an ecosystem of 10 global brands, including the award-winning Banyan Tree, Angsana, Cassia, Dhawa, Folio, Garrya, Homm and Laguna, as well as two Banyan Tree brand extensions: Banyan Tree Escape and Banyan Tree Veya.

"We operate 64 properties across 17 countries and each of the sites across the world adopt a 'Stay for Good' framework, which integrates responsible stewardship through the creation of exceptional, design-led experiences for guests; providing fair and dignified employment; enabling long-term prosperity for communities where they have a presence; protecting and remediating ecosystems and generating sustained, long-term returns for shareholders," explains Eddy See, President and CEO of Banyan Tree Group.

Recently the Group has relaunched the Garrya Tong sai Bay Samui, which opened in December 2022 following a rebrand of the well-established resort on Thailand's island of Koh Samui. This resort sits on 28 acres of breathtaking tropical land infused with Garrya's 'self-care, simplicity, slow life, sleep & rest and savour' offering which incorporates multi-purpose suites and villas and the 8LEMENTS SPA that contributes to an overall sense of wellbeing.

In addition, Banyan Tree AIUla opened back in October 2022 and was developed by the Royal Commission for AIUla which brings wellbeing-centred luxury to a heritage site. This new resort features two dining venues including Saffron, Banyan Tree's signature Thai restaurant and the renowned Banyan Tree Spa with carefully curated wellness experiences that combine Asian traditions and local elements.

Looking to the future, the business is on track to develop and open over 50 properties by 2025, doubling their current portfolio. "We

have been planning and preparing for expansion in Japan as a strategic market for a long time. It boasts all the attributes of a great destination, a rich culture and history, natural beauty across all seasons, high-quality products and services, excellent infrastructure and connectivity and strong demand for domestic and international arrivals."

In Japan they will be opening two new sites, Banyan Tree Higashiyama and Cassia Hirafu Niseko between now and 2026. They have also signed a deal to debut their Banyan Tree Residences in Manila, as well as their Angsana brand in Spain.

When discussing what it is that attracts the brand to new properties, Eddy immediately highlights conversion opportunities, saying that there is still a huge opportunity, particularly in Asia, where less than three per cent of hotels are branded. "We will continue to increase conversion opportunities, particularly in resort destinations and emerging second-tier tourism destinations. We believe in constantly being agile to address different needs on different occasions and expanding our portfolio while keeping our operations proactive and efficient."

Sustainability has become absolutely vital in its importance around the world and it is a theme that runs through the entire Banyan Tree organisation. Since 2020, their Global Foundation has launched the Greater Good Grants (GGG), a sustainability initiative where they award grants to diverse projects protecting natural habitats and teaching local communities alternative livelihood skills.

In addition, the whole business is guided by its eight proprietary wellbeing pillars and their entire ecosystem of experiences feature nature-oriented environments, plant-based menus, wellbeing and sustainable lifestyle practices. They are also on a decarbonisation journey that encompasses all their ecosystem offerings, including residential development, hospitality and spa management, retail and education.

As the topic of conversation moves onto why guests remain loyal to the brand and what makes Banyan Tree standout, Eddy explains that, through the years, luxury has evolved to become more personalised and that today customers want experiences that they have a connection with

and brands that drive emotional responses will be the ones that last through seasons and trends.

"At Banyan Tree, luxury is about finding meaning and purpose through our brand offerings – seeing the world with new eyes or a fresh perspective through the lens of nature and wellbeing. True luxury is feeling rejuvenated through the healing power of nature or having a renewed sense of purpose after experiencing local culture. We champion our ethos of "embracing the environment, empowering people", we harmonise business operations with natural and cultural heritage and cultivate meaningful stakeholder partnerships."

As the company looks to the future, they are excited and optimistic about the rebound of travel and tourism and the fact that wellbeing continues to be a strong contributor to global tourism and more people

are investing in self-improvement. They address this through their Veya and Escape brand extensions and new brand Garrya.

One final point Eddy wants to make before our time is up is the company's storytelling platform called Compass, which spotlights ground-breakers and change-makers as they share their creative journeys and practices toward building a better planet. The content series is called The Possibility Podcast, hosted and produced by award-winning storyteller and TEDx speaker Mukul Bhatia, whose sustainability work and vision have been lauded by Forbes America, The New York Times, National Geographic and GQ Magazine.

"With this intentional, slow-storytelling platform we hope that Compass will be able to inspire and interest people who are seeking to redefine their perspective and create lasting change for good."



Banyan Tree AIUla
Saudi Arabia



Garrya Niho Castle
Kyoto, Japan



Garrya Tong sai Bay
Samui, Thailand



Banyan Tree
Phuket, Thailand



Dhawa Ihuru
Maldives

Hof van Rijswijk
Rijswijk, Netherlands



Striking A Perfect Balance

Based in the Netherlands, Tconcept are specialists in architecture, concept design and placemaking around the globe and their mission is to build places that are inviting and inspiring. Here, RLI spends some time with Founding Partner and Senior Architect Willem-Joost de Vries to learn more about how the company works, some of their recently completed projects and what their goals are moving forward.



Tconcept creates projects where the aesthetic, functional, economic, feasible and sustainable aspects are in full harmony. On top of this, they always add value to a project, whether this is for the stakeholders, the visitor, the tenant, the city or the investor. They do this by building attractive, sustainable spaces where people feel welcome and safe, a perfect balance between public space and lettable area.

The business has a long and broad history in retail-based inner-city re-development. With 25 years of experience in different countries with varying disciplines and architects, they now create projects that alter city destinations and repurpose buildings and spaces in 22 countries all across Europe.

"These inner-city redevelopments are building on the DNA of each city, ensuring that redundant and obsolete spaces are reused and revitalised," explains Willem-Joost de Vries, Founding Partner and Senior Architect of Tconcept. "We re-imagine a city and we do this with our people-based approach to planning. It is not about shopping centres, it is about meeting points and about human scale, bringing the new retail experience into a healthy-city plan."

An example of this can be found at Zuidplein, the main shopping centre of the southern part of Rotterdam. With over 160 shops it is one of the largest shopping complexes in the Netherlands with 60,000sq m GLA. The mall is the centre of the Heart of the South mixed-use densification area that also encompasses a residential area, a cinema, a theatre, a hotel and a convention centre.

As part of the renovation of this area, Tconcept convinced more than 50 individual owners to invest in the centre so that not only would more people visit the centre, but they would extend their stay on-site. They focused primarily on improving the sightlines, quality, circulation and the experience of the mall. Entrances, malls, squares and touch points were redesigned. By removing bridges and stairs, installing higher shop fronts and using light and natural materials, they transformed the mall into a transparent and fresh environment that featured some attractive F&B spaces. The mall also increased in size by 7,000sq m through the addition of convenience stores.

"Away from major flagship projects such as Zuidplein, we work on projects across a multitude of scales. In Peru for example we are



designing in cooperation with two other Dutch firms Jora Vision (Leisure Design) and Conceptional (F&B Design) a theme park name INKA park that will be the biggest theme park in South America upon completion," de Vries highlights.

Other large-scale new projects for the firm are a retail park named Kampus Istanbul and an inner city mixed-use project called Orion in Corlu, both in Turkey.

While the business may be best known for designing shopping centres, in recent years they have become specialists in transforming and redesigning shopping areas, particularly those built in the modernist movement. Rijswijk in its home country is a by-product of this. Originally a shopping centre of 60,000sq m GLA, the site has been transformed into a mixed-use complex through the addition of 100,000sq m of housing.

This has been done partly by reusing the concrete structures made originally for retail and turning them into housing. Willem-Joost explains that new housing towers have been built around a park and new retail has been introduced to strengthen the shopping loop. He goes on to say that the site will become a strong centre, with social and private housing, leisure and public functions that are all viewable on newly created parks.

Relationships are pivotal to any business and Tconcept has maintained long-term relationships with many of their clients, leading to trust and even friendship. Their in-house architects consist of an eclectic mix of nationalities, each with their own individual skill sets and de Vries points out that between them they speak some 12 languages, which helps them understand the needs of their clients.

This trust with clients allows the company to excel in the area of sustainability, as they are able to challenge their clients on the sustainable ambition of any given project. Whilst the common way is by achieving

the BREEAM or LEED certification, de Vries feels there is more to it than this.

"It is also about circularity, biodiversity, smart mobility, heat stress, water and 'everlasting design'. A building that will function for decades without major renovation is very sustainable."

Currently they are designing a harbour for electric boats and sailing boats on the Zuidas in Amsterdam. This harbour will be an example of sustainability in a nature area, The Nieuwe Meer. Everything they are constructing there is made from CLT and is 100 per cent circular and solar powered.

When discussing what the key strengths of Tconcept are and what de Vries can put their ongoing success down to, he explains they understand that a good design needs to add value across the board. "We can do this because we are multidisciplinary and well-rehearsed in addressing the issues of today. We also understand the financial restraint, all should be in balance."

As our time with Willem-Joost comes to an end, he finishes our conversation on the topics of challenges and the future, saying that the challenge moving forward is to make cities smart and healthy, to make them knowledge centres, creative hubs, green spaces and most of all, sustainable.

"Population is growing and people are gravitating towards the cities. We as architects have an enormous task together with the stakeholders to create this new world. The future will be shaped by the decisions we make now. Picture a city on a human scale where everyone is walking and cycling or on electric mopeds, circular buildings, urban farms, pocket parks, zero energy buildings, solar and wind powered. We want to build technologically smart cities where people feel safe and at home."

www.tconcept.nl



Hof van Rijswijk
Rijswijk, Netherlands



INKA Park
Paysasmayo, Peru



Port City, Oranjestad
Aruba



Hilltown Mall
Izmir, Turkey

Passeig de Gràcia
Barcelona, Spain

Best of British



Part of the AWWG group of brands and the home of British menswear, Hackett London is known for its excellence in craftsmanship and a distinction for detail. Inspired by quintessential British menswear, Hackett specialises in classic English tailoring for the modern man. Here, RLI spends sometime with AWWG CEO Marcella Wartenbergh to learn more about this brand that remains true to its origins.

The Hackett London story began forty years ago when Jeremy Hackett opened his first store selling second-hand clothes on the King's Road in Chelsea. It was here that he began creating his own garments by merging traditional styles with contemporary cuts, perfect for those seeking Savile Row expertise without the associated cost.

"Today, the brand boasts over 1,000 points of sale across the globe and offers a range of products and services including: made-to-measure, personal tailoring and bespoke services available at our store at 14 Savile Row," explains Marcella Wartenbergh, CEO of AWWG.

At the beginning of this year the business has 55 own-brand stores across the globe, 36 full-price stores and 19 outlets across eight countries along with 36 franchise stores globally.

Always looking for new opportunities to grow, one of their most recent openings is the new flagship shop on Barcelona's famous Passeig de Gràcia. The new shop is housed in an impressive heritage-listed building with distinguished art deco details at the entrance. Inside, the full London essence of Hackett is evident, where tailoring permeates the space and blends with the neoclassical columns of the original building.

Another remarkable opening of which the brand is very proud is its site at the Battersea Power Station (BPS), a major development which opened last October. The emphasis on design and innovation at BPS

matched perfectly with their own values of British heritage and DNA.

Future Hackett stores are due to launch at 69 New Bond Street in London, which will be a 2,350sq ft unit that will offer a premium collection, as well as a range of tailoring services in-store. An additional UK store will launch in Manchester.

Outside of the UK, a new site will open in Spain in the Caleido shopping centre which is situated in Madrid's financial district and another will be unveiled in Paris. Meanwhile, the DACH countries of Germany, Austria and Switzerland represent a key trio of markets for AWWG and there is a transformation plan to lead the growth of its brands in this region. AWWG has opened recently in Germany for Hackett new stores in Düsseldorf, Berlin, Baden-Baden and Wiesbaden. In addition, Mexico and the Middle East are markets where they have plans to expand via their partners, with a new flagship store in Mexico City.

"Our goal is to continue to grow and expand our brands in the markets where we are already present. We keep on working on our plan for the development and expansion in new markets such as the Middle East, India and Latin America. In the long term, we will consider other markets such as Korea and Japan where we have strong partners. The reputation, acclaim and the brand's distinctive style are just a few of the reasons customers in these customers will identify with them," explains Wartenbergh.



Battersea Power Station
London, UK

As Marcella moves onto talking about new products and initiatives, she highlights that nowadays trends are innumerable and how important is that Hackett follow the trends that are closest to their DNA and consumer.

An example of this is their Spring-Summer 2023 collection which combines functionality and flexibility in a fashion-forward collection that reaches towards the future, while staying true to its heritage. The brand has incorporated three new capsules into its catalogue: Hackett Sport, a selection of premium athleisure wear that accommodates the active lifestyles of modern men; Resort, a colourful collection for the warmer months and Savile Row, an exclusive range available at select stores, crafted using the best in European fabrics.

"Success for this brand involves staying true to our identity by offering a personalised service, thus transforming the purchasing process into an experiential service for our customers. The customer experience starts from the moment they enter our stores, where he identifies with the brand and its values, connects with the brand and is advised by our professional who know in detail all the pieces of the collection and what the customer needs," Wartenbergh says.

Something that is important in the modern world is having a strong social media presence and the brand certainly possesses this. They use social networks to reach new audiences and to transmit the values and

heritage that set them apart from other brands. They also work hard to create high-quality content that engages their community, to generate an emotional connection through a digital experience that emphasises storytelling as well as product. Their objective is to continue increasing brand awareness and to grow their community in key markets by staying aligned with new trends on the platform.

Sustainability is another key factor for brands in 2023 and at Hackett they aim to produce high-quality, sustainable fashion, so they maximise its use of responsible materials. They focus on BCI cotton, recycled polyesters and nylons as well as starting the journey on improving animal derived materials such as wool and leather. A high quality of craftsmanship guarantees longevity of garments, supporting less clothing wastage and raw material usage. "Today's consumers are much more aware of sustainability. It is commitment as a group to work towards a sustainable business model that delivers results."

The company stands out from the crowd by combining traditional styles with modern cuts in a uniquely British style, according to Marcella and will continue to do so moving forward.

"Hackett is a symbol of all that is best in British style today; with a reputation that still exceeds its rapidly growing retail and wholesale footprint. The company is now an established global brand offering 'Essential British Kit' to customers across the world," Wartenbergh concludes.

Savile Row
London, UK

Passeig de Gràcia
Barcelona, Spain

Sloane Street
London, UK

Regent Street
London, England



Al Heerah Beach
Al Fisht, Sharjah, UAE

Striving for Excellence



In 1964 the first Tim Hortons restaurant opened its doors in Hamilton, Ontario and people from around the world have been ordering the Tim Hortons iconic Original Blend coffee, Double-Double coffees, Donuts and Timbits ever since. In this interview RLI spends some time with Hesham Almekkawi, CEO of Tim Hortons – Middle East to discuss how the company is expanding in one of its major global markets.

The company which began life almost 60 years ago is now Canada's largest restaurant chain and serves over five million cups of coffee every day with 80 per cent of Canadians visiting a site in the country at least once a month. More than a coffee and bake shop, Tim Hortons is part of the fabric of Canada and a proud symbol of the country and its values.

The business began its international expansion in 2011 with the UAE's first café & bake shop which was opened in Dubai by the iconic retail group Apparel. In the last 12 years global expansion has become an increasing priority for the brand across many countries.

"In recent years the brand has introduced its well-loved offerings to guests beyond Canada and the US," explains Hesham Almekkawi, CEO of Tim Horton – Middle East. "Currently we have over 5,100 restaurants across 14 countries and regions, including the Middle East, China, the

UK, Mexico, Spain, Thailand and the Philippines."

Today, under AG Café, the brand has expanded in the GCC to reach more than 250 locations across Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Bahrain and recently opened its first seven restaurants in India. This year will also see the company expand into Egypt for the first time.

Recently five new stores were inaugurated on the same day in Kuwait and Almekkawi says this was a fantastic success. The brand has been welcomed by Kuwaitis with an overwhelming reception with many people awaiting its launch into the country after experiencing it for the first time in Canada. On the day of launch, people queued for hours in advance of the opening, reflecting the strength of the brand in the region.

The vision of Tim Hortons across the Middle East in years to come is to reach 500 restaurants. While it is not immediately their intention to become the largest in terms of number of restaurants, what is important

is that they become 'The Café of Choice' for people across the region.

When it comes to developing new products and initiatives to maintain its position in the sector, the CEO emphasises that they ask the customers what they think. "We do not develop to sell. We develop products because customers told us there is a demand. We try to match the taste and preferences of consumers in all six of our current Middle Eastern markets. It is not an easy job to do all of that while maintaining the DNA of the brand. I always tell people – ask the customers. They will always tell you the truth."

The Tim Hortons mission is to create experiential moments for their customers because today it is not just about the product or service. Today, the experience retailers provide is what keeps customers coming back, whether it is a fashion brand that is in question or a restaurant. The company pays attention to small details such as the look and feel of the restaurants, the level of lighting and music all the while maintaining their superior level of product and service. Great pride is taken in their coffee as it is made from 100 per cent Arabica beans that are ethically sourced and they are the only brand that can claim this. Almekkawi feels today's consumers are becoming more interested than ever to know these details and the company is proud to tell them.

In terms of social media and how this is utilised, work is being undertaken on a complete evolution to the group's digital marketing strategy in 2023 to present a complete ecosystem solution that can then be rolled out to each market in which they operate, accounting for different cultures and different needs across different markets.

Along with their social media presence, Tim Hortons is also

relaunching their App to add more engaging features and to cover all segments of the business such as dine-in, pick-up or delivery in a seamless and enjoyable process.

"Sustainability is another area that we are focusing on and we have made headway in this regard as well," Almekkawi explains. "A few years ago we eliminated the use of plastic bags and encourage dine-in customers to use ceramics. We are also relaunching our reusable cups campaign that we introduced before the pandemic where we give a discount if the customers bring their own reusable cups that we sell in our restaurants to minimise the use of paper cups."

The business is humble, unique and ambitious. They continually keep an eye on competition, but their focus remains on being true to what the brand stands for and they always listen to what customers are saying. They love to be part of communities and are perceived as a cool brand that customers from all ages love to be associated with. Humility and striving for excellence are the keys to do so according to the CEO.

"The pandemic has created many challenges for the F&B industry and retail in general. We are faced with the constant increase in coffee and raw material prices coupled with unprecedented delays in shipping. Also, operating across multiple international markets creates many challenges due to the different regulations, taxation and government rules. With all of these challenges, we have to maintain our value proposition to consumers. It is a tough battle for all retailers and we are constantly working to mitigate it. While there are a lot of challenges to overcome, we remain optimistic for the future and what it has in store," Almekkawi concludes.



Dubai Hills Mall
Dubai, UAE



Dubai Festival City Mall
Dubai, UAE



Dubai Hills Mall
Dubai, UAE



Abu Dhabi Corniche
Abu Dhabi, UAE

A World of Adventure Awaits



On a mission to build the world's first immersive entertainment platform, Immersive Gamebox utilises best-in-class technology to create social adventures in interactive smart rooms. We recently caught up with company CEO & Co-Founder Will Dean, MBE to discuss how its recent expansion is only the start of its global growth and how its concept is enhancing the social experience.

Immersive Gamebox is a group gaming platform reinventing screen time and is creating meaningful human connection through social gaming. The concept behind Immersive Gamebox is to play interactive games that are based around social fun, teamwork and group experiences. Immersive Gamebox features an extensive library, including games such as Angry Birds and Squid Game as a result of strategic partnerships as well as original IP games. Through the IGB visor and patented technology for immersive screens, players truly become a part of the game.

The Co-Founders Will Dean and David Spindler are driven by a desire to unite the world through technology-enabled shared play and feel that play is more than just having fun. They feel that shared play in particular has the power to bring us together, create bonds and remind us of what it means to be human. They are challenging the ever increasing issue of social isolation caused by technology and flipping it on its head.

Immersive Gamebox currently operates 20 locations across the US and EMEA and is rapidly adding new locations to the portfolio. The company operates across malls, family entertainment centres and dense city locations from New York and London to Berlin and Dubai.

Immersive Gamebox is scaling quickly to meet demand as the company just hit its 700,000th customer. With 12 locations in the US, and more to come, the company is also continuing to expand outside the states. Immersive Gamebox just opened its first franchise venue in Berlin which was closely followed by two new locations in the UAE, a region that is fast becoming a hotspot in the entertainment space.

"We also recently signed \$90M worth of franchise deals across Germany, Ireland and the UAE to support our extensive growth plans and will continue to build a blended business model," explains Will Dean, CEO & Co-Founder of Immersive Gamebox. "Our goal is to reach 100 locations by 2024 which will be through a combination of owner-operated venues and strategic partnerships around the world. We believe that franchise and concession partners will form a substantial part of our future growth strategy."

The experience IGB has created is one that has broad appeal and the team's ability to translate the game content into any language means that they can instantly localise. With this in mind, Immersive Gamebox is currently in discussions with potential partners across the GCC, Europe and Asia and look forward to entering new territories with them in the near future.

To maintain a unique position in the market, Immersive Gamebox stays on top of new innovations and trends within the gaming and technology industries, while its patented technology and gaming content are both developed in-house, giving the team the agility to react and adapt quickly if and when it's needed. The company's team of developers has a deep understanding of the gaming industry, what consumers want and the technology they can leverage to deliver best-in-class entertainment.

"We are currently building more components to optimise the player experience, including hand-held 'wand' controllers, voice-recognition and AI. However our innovation does not stop with the Gamebox itself, it also includes the development of new venue formats to increase our



customer reach and ability to access our experience," explains Dean.

The concept currently sees a 25% customer return rate within the first month, which is steadily increasing as Immersive Gamebox continues to expand on a gaming library that appeals to all ages. Designed by an in-house game studio, Immersive Gamebox has 15 intuitive games available with new titles being released regularly. The growing library consists of licensed and original IP games, including a recent partnership with Netflix to develop one of its most-watched series, Squid Game, into an immersive experience.

"We will also launch our new Immersive Brainbox initiative this year which will make free educational gaming content available for school groups to play. By continuing to build partnerships and content that bring beloved characters and storylines to life we believe that our customers will keep coming back for more," Dean highlights.

Social media has grown so much in the past 10 to 15 years and it is now a vitally important avenue for brands to connect with their consumers and that is exactly how the company utilises it. Instagram and TikTok have become fantastic ways for the company to showcase the Gameboxes and give consumers a "behind the scenes" look at any location. The team can post videos of people playing the games, highlight how versatile it really is and give consumers a sneak peek at the games they can experience.

"Ultimately, social media has created a new avenue for reaching our audiences and having genuine interactions with them. We have our consumers and their feedback right at our fingertips. We can implement

that in real time and continuously evolve our processes to enhance the in-person user experience," Dean explains.

The technology offered by Immersive Gamebox is entirely different to any other service available and the innovative use of technology is a key differentiator for them. The idea behind the company was to fill the niche that was empty in today's group gaming. With current VR experiences – due to the need to deprive your senses of what is actually happening around you to immerse yourself in VR – Dean explains that you lose the opportunity to connect and enjoy the same experience as your friends and family.

With the Gamebox itself becoming an immersive space and by the experiences being set up as team challenges or battles, customers are constantly interacting with their group, creating a shared experience.

As he discusses what comes next for the company, Will says he is excited for the future with the upcoming openings and exciting partnerships they have in the pipeline. They are looking forward to continuing to bring people's favourite stories to life whilst growing their own IP and game library.

"The biggest challenge we are facing in the year ahead is scaling fast enough to keep pace with our consumers. We are introducing new games and formats that adults and families want. We are meeting that demand for innovation. But our biggest challenge will be opening new locations to ensure that everyone who wants to experience Immersive Gamebox has the opportunity to."

www.immersivegamebox.com



The Role of Technology in Top Tier Customer Experience

David Fuller-Watts, CEO of Mallcomm, explains how digital technology is helping retailers to elevate the customer experience in-store and online.



As retailers continue to respond to changes in consumer behaviour and an uncertain economic climate, the need to improve the customer experience has intensified. To differentiate in a competitive and challenging market, creating a memorable experience is essential and technology has a vital role to play.

With more shoppers spending time in the digital world, the customer journey now begins long before they physically enter a store. This is fuelling the need for more effective omni-channel strategies. Consistency is key to this approach, ensuring the customer experience across multiple channels meets changing needs and expectations.

Streamlining journeys

Customers expect the purchasing journey to be quick, simple and stress free. The same principle applies to the returns process. With online retail significantly increasing the number of returns, creating more efficiency is essential.

Technology, including artificial intelligence (AI) is already being used to tackle rising returns and costs. Automated fulfilment processes, virtual fitting rooms and tailored size advice are just some of the initiatives being deployed across the retail industry.

At the same time, many retailers are proactively encouraging shoppers to bring their items back to store to reduce costs. This approach doesn't, however, remove the need for technology. Digitisation can streamline the in-store returns process making it far quicker and simpler for customers. The use of digital touch-screens is just one example and for larger shopping centres, there is the potential to adopt a similar strategy, providing shoppers with more flexibility.

By using a digital platform, retailers can centralise the returns process for their customers, enabling shoppers to select a preferred time for bringing back their items. This will help them to avoid the queues at peak periods, removing stress and freeing up time for browsing and shopping.

Keeping connected

Another benefit of an omni-channel strategy is that it can help retailers to build stronger connections with their customers. By creating memorable experiences both on and offline, retailers can boost engagement and loyalty.

In-store product demonstrations, personal styling, events or offers, can all help to encourage customers back into physical shops and incentivise sales. But to maximise the effectiveness of this strategy, the online experience must match up.

Customers now demand relevant and accurate information at their fingertips. Adopting new technology can meet this need by bringing the information that matters the most into one place. This means that retailers' latest news, including details of special offers and in-store events, can be communicated to them through a single source and tailored to customer demographics.

This provides a more bespoke experience that extends beyond the purchase of goods or services. Customers also have more opportunities to engage with the brand and long term, this technology can help to foster a greater sense of community across both physical and digital spaces.

Centralising information through digital technology can improve the experience in other ways too. It enables customers to directly communicate with retailers, helping them to receive a swifter response to any queries. At shopping centres, multiple applications can be brought

onto one platform, providing shoppers with information that helps them to plan their visit more effectively, including car parking capacity.

A step ahead

Continuously improving the customer experience goes hand in hand with data monitoring, collection and analysis. There is a vast range of technology that can be adopted to understand a customer's behaviour, their needs and expectations, helping retailers to create more tailored services and experiences that build loyalty.

Artificial intelligence can be used to identify key trends and enable retailers to respond accordingly such as adapting marketing, merchandising, supply chains and promotions.

Digital technology can also be adopted to create bespoke, online feedback forms, polls and surveys that analyse customer feedback and sales data, ensuring retailers get a clearer picture of customer satisfaction as well as the impact of experiential retail initiatives and marketing campaigns.

People first

Improving the customer experience relies on people and ensuring retail staff are happy and motivated. After the challenges of the past two years, engaging workers has become more important than ever before. Technology will never replace good people skills, but it can help to make their jobs easier.

In shopping centres for example, digitising operational processes such as maintenance or cleaning requests, keeps retail tenants productive, saving their time and streamlining management.

Digital tools can also be used as part of wider employee recognition strategies, enabling managers to offer online awards that acknowledge excellence and offering the ability to share an employee's achievements with the wider team or retail community.

Standing out

As customer expectations continue to rise so does the need for more memorable experiences in retail. In response, technology is evolving bringing with it a vast range of digital tools that can be used to meet the changing needs of shoppers. From improving connections and communication through to more forensic analysis of trends and behaviours, technology is playing a crucial role in ensuring retailers can differentiate, boost loyalty and increase sales.



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Capturing the Power of Digital



In this month's Leisure Insight, James Brooke, Founder & CEO of Amplience takes some time out to discuss how leisure and travel firms can capture the power of digital experiences to meet modern customer expectations.

As the pandemic gradually fades into the past, companies working in the leisure and travel sectors have an opportunity to build and boom once again. Demand for holidays and leisure activities has spiked in recent months and in many ways nothing has changed. The reality, however, is that everything has changed. We've been through two years of lockdown (on and off) and there has been a natural progression to a more digitally connected world, which means consumers are now looking for more meaningful and personalised experiences whether they are enjoying a spa day or jetting off for a luxury vacation.

With the almost infinite amount of content and information we all have at our fingertips, it is easier than ever for us to do our own research online; find the best dates to suit our calendars and seek out great deals. We don't need third-party agents when we can find what we need online, but we do expect great service from the events or locations that we book. In short, leisure and travel are booming, but managing customer expectations is becoming more of a challenge.

The retail sector has already had the advantage of reinventing itself through digital first services including e-commerce and mobile apps that help it to connect its physical and online offerings. Travel and leisure tend to rely more on physical footfall. However, companies operating in these sectors can learn from retailers, particularly when it comes to digital content and delivering a memorable customer experience.

Adjusting to change

Consumers interact with brands and make purchase decisions quite differently now than they did three years ago, and if companies are to succeed, they need to change too. They can't rely on a rebound in customer bookings simply because Covid restrictions have lifted. The start of 2023 provides a unique opportunity to embrace a faster, frictionless and more connected digital experience.

Much of this lies in the content that companies serve to their customers (and potential customers) as they go through each stage of the buying journey. In each of those connected moments more value can be delivered and this will turn into more revenue. The right approach means leisure and travel brands can connect with customers on a deeper level, engaging interest, emotion and memories. The digital experience is not just selling tickets for an air balloon ride, providing gift vouchers for a facial or organising a boat trip, it's about all the enhancements that can be offered at the right time, in the right moment, with multiple chances to make additional revenue once the customer has started their journey. It's more complex than retail in many ways – where an online visitor just has to see the right content at the right time – leisure brands are dealing with multiple different elements that make up the overall experience, from research to booking to delivering the service, even providing hotels, insurance, add-ons, ancillaries and more. But if a brand can bring all these elements together and make it all feel quick, easy and seamless for the customer, they are already winning.

Tech makes it possible

Effecting change lies in the underlying infrastructure: the technology that enables digital content and experiences to be offered. Traditional monolithic platforms weren't built to give companies the ability to evolve and adapt

their experiences at the current rate of customer behaviour change. They can't provide the tools for a 'composable commerce' approach which brings the best of different technologies and applications together in one place, all working seamlessly to suit a company's specific needs.

With the rise of 'headless architecture', where the presentation layer, i.e. web pages, apps and so on are detached from the backend functionality, companies can break away from slow, expensive and inflexible infrastructure and create experiences using APIs (application programming interfaces) to control each part of the experience individually without being stuck in the backend where change requires developer time.

This level of technical freedom means travel and leisure companies can be more like retailers – super-responsive and super-fast, providing curated experiences based on actual customer data. As they progress online the company is ready to provide the next best offer or outcome at the best point of engagement. Customers can interact on all devices because everything is connected and works in tandem and customer satisfaction and conversions increase as a result.

Using headless and composable commerce is like conducting an orchestra. The different technologies and applications are the instruments and composable commerce is the conductor, bringing the best musicians in the world together to play in time (and in tune) together.

The outcome

Because the frontend and backend are no longer tied together response times can be faster and scaling to meet demand is much easier. Companies can test and iterate more often with less risk and be agile enough to capitalise on new opportunities to broaden their digital offer. Matching personalisation with expectation is straightforward because composable commerce encourages easy incorporation of contextualised content, products and search results.

With more freedom to innovate, leisure and travel firms can focus on the capabilities that they know work best for their customers, confident in the knowledge that they have the technical infrastructure in place to meet their digital expectations, now and in the future.



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Employee Wellbeing in the Leisure Industry

Hector Hughes is Co-Founder, Unplugged – The UK's original off grid cabin escape to offer guests a three-day digital detox and here he explains how companies need to do more to help employees recharge and how it is not just about giving them extra holiday.



Last week I had lunch with a friend who'd just got back from a holiday in Greece. He had a great time but said he couldn't fully switch off. Why? Because he couldn't stay off Instagram and emails. Every idle moment he'd reach for his phone. In this respect he is not alone.

Almost 50 per cent of workers check their emails for at least one hour a day whilst on holiday. It is driven by anything from a sense of obligation or fear of missing out, to pure boredom and a force of habit. The implications are that it's harder than ever to switch off meaning for many, holidays are no longer the sacred time they once were.

The last decade has brought about endless technological advancements in the way we connect - personally and at work. We're online more than ever, with over 50 per cent of UK adults now spending a cumulative 11 hours a day online, which is negatively impacting mental wellbeing. People are beginning to wake up to the health impacts that high screen time and the 'always on' culture is having on their happiness. Excessive screen time has been linked from everything from depression and anxiety, to poorer quality of sleep and lower self-esteem. You can only imagine what that does to our performance at work.

This has profound implications for companies. Much of the employee wellbeing industry barely goes beyond free office snacks. Serious issues are going unaddressed. With the recent rise of remote working and employees having greater flexibility, it's becoming increasingly difficult for people to truly disconnect from work, with nearly 86 per cent of employees admitting being unable to switch off out of work hours.

Gone are the days where taking a holiday was simply enough. People are still working during their time off and it's taking a toll on both their mental and physical health. But change is happening. Employees themselves have said they want to take breaks that improve their mental wellbeing or challenge them. People want breaks that add to their life. More than 80 per cent of Gen Z and Millennials are looking for a unique experience for their next trip, such as a yoga retreat or a digital detox. They want to try new things and expand their knowledge through experiences, not just a few days off to catch up with admin or an all-inclusive break.

Gen Z, who now make up 20 per cent of the workforce in the UK,

are much more aware of mental well-being after witnessing their elders suffer from burnout. They require companies to 'practise what they preach' in line with their company values. Looking after their mental wellbeing is non-negotiable. Work-life balance and flexibility is at the core of their values when searching for and staying in, a job. So if you don't value them, they'll jump ship. Gen Z workers are much more likely to job hop than millennials so it's becoming increasingly important for companies to offer better wellbeing support and flexibility in and out of the workplace.

A growing number of companies are coming up with innovative ways to achieve this. In the last year we've seen everything from company-wide weeks off to, in the case of Salesforce, launching their own employee ranch for time in nature. The benefits of nature are well documented. One study found that people who spend just 120 minutes in nature a week are significantly more likely to report good health and higher psychological wellbeing than those who don't visit nature at all.

Since we first launched Unplugged, what has surprised us most is not the rising demand for digital detoxes in the last 12 months, but the companies using it as an employee benefit. We saw 20 companies add this to their wellbeing packages in the first couple of months of this year. Staff retention and employee happiness were amongst the most popular reasons given. Employees return from their escape more rested, more productive and more motivated to work. Happy employees mean a happy company.

By promoting a balanced lifestyle, companies can improve workplace wellbeing, boost staff retention and increase productivity. Happy and healthy employees are more motivated, engaged and lead to higher job satisfaction, reducing the likelihood of them leaving the company. When employees feel that their employer cares about their wellbeing, they are more likely to feel a strong sense of loyalty and commitment.

I, for one, am excited to see where this goes. Companies need to do more to encourage their employees to disconnect from work and prioritise their mental and physical health. Not only for the sake of the employee. Those who get it right also create a supportive workplace culture, improve their employees' wellbeing, keep them happy and drive their success.

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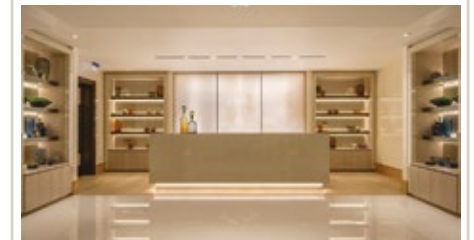
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Foundations For The Future

The last few years have been unique in ways people could never have imagined as the global pandemic had an effect on people all around the world across every sector. Architects and masterplanners in every corner of the globe had to take stock and decide how best to move forward in a world forever changed. Over the coming few pages RLI takes a closer look at a selection of projects from around the world that highlight the changes in mixed-use developments and how the design of these schemes is more important than ever.

At its simplest level, a masterplan is a framework within which a location is encouraged to develop or change. Great provinces and historic cities are often held up as prime examples of masterplanning, however current masterplanning practice is a relatively recent development. It faces a number of different challenges to historic masterplanning such as the fact cities are changing at a faster rate than ever before, the make-up of our societies is changing and with this there is an ongoing shift in the cultural expectations and requirements of the urban realm. We have moved away from a stabilised vernacular culture in terms of technology, ethnicity, aspiration, economy, density, etc. Land allocation and land use now follow different economic, civic and political structures. The advancement of technology means that the way space is used is undergoing significant change and the population in many key countries and cities is increasing rapidly.

There are two main types of masterplan:

1. A strategic masterplan - This might identify how an entire country, region or group of cities might be regenerated or changed in order to meet a perceived challenge. Public sector clients tend to be more likely to undertake strategic masterplans which may be commissioned by a government department or regional board in order to help shape policy.

2. A project masterplan - This tends to be focused on a specific site with definable boundaries. A project masterplan might be commissioned by a developer with a piece of land to exploit, or by an estate wishing to tackle a backlog of defects or alter its building stock to respond to changing requirements.

The above are the viewpoints and thoughts of Andrew Comer from Buro Happold and Steven Smith from urban narrative on the Designing Buildings Wiki page 'Masterplanning' and over the next few pages RLI

will show a varied selection of schemes that highlight both of these types of masterplan and how architecture around the world is helping to shape new and unique retail real estate developments.

Global Projects

Set to open this month and located in the upscale community of Hoakalei, Wai Kai is a new lifestyle destination that will be unlike any other waterfront development on the island of O'ahu. With more than 100 shops, restaurants and entertainment, Wai Kai will be a new gathering place where visitors can connect to both land and ocean. Designed by CallisonRTKL, Wai Kai's retail environment is designed to cater to everyone from local residents to international and domestic visitors. The wide range of offerings spread throughout Wai Kai showcase signature restaurants and shops that feature Hawaii's local flavours. In connection to the island's beautiful landscape, Wai Kai incorporates a variety of lush greenery, Hawaiian plants and koi ponds to create an oasis-like environment. Wai Kai at Hoakalei is destined to become an active year-round destination where residents and visitors can experience these first-of-their-kind attractions, signature events and be at one with the natural beauty of the Pacific Ocean.

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 launching last year, the residential element is on course to open this year and mark final completion on the project. The Well will become a complete and unique mix of shops, restaurants, fresh food markets, workspaces and residencies 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 their building's best-in-class digital connectivity, technological infrastructure and

commitment to emerging digital trends.

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.

Snøhetta has unveiled the design for its largest project in Japan to date, a mixed-use development in Tokyo offering retail, a hotel and art and cultural experiences. The 117,000sq m Shibuya Upper West Project by developers Tokyu Group is located in the Shibuya district of Tokyo. Billed as the city's newest 'urban retreat', it is scheduled for completion in 2027. "In such a well-known and historically significant area in one of the world's most exciting cities, the project is paying homage to and respecting traditions as well as looking ahead," said Robert Greenwood, Partner and Managing Director of Snøhetta Hong Kong. "We aim to design for the future and aspire to find the most sustainable solutions, contributing to Japan's goal of being carbon-neutral by 2050." The project will be developed in collaboration with the adjacent Bunkamura cultural complex, which promotes art and culture throughout Tokyo. According to a news release, the 36-storey building pays tribute to "the distant foothills of Mount Fuji". Snøhetta plans to achieve the highest possible sustainability ratings for the Shibuya Upper West Project.



The Ellinikon, Athens, Greece
Architect: Foster + Partners
Developer: Lamda Developments

The largest city-centre project in Europe, Westfield Hamburg-Überseequartier is set to become a new urban community hotspot. Encompassing a unique culture, leisure, entertainment and dining offer, it will feature a 10-screen flagship cinema, beauty and wellness centres, international and local restaurants, bars and cafés and the latest trends in entertainment technology. This mixed-use urban district will feature flexible offices with 360° views over HafenCity and the harbour, modern apartments with direct access to the waterfront, three hotels and a 200-store shopping centre offering the best local and international brands together with a wide range of services and digital innovations, for an enhanced customer journey. The shopping centre itself will span 80,500sq m of retail, leisure and restaurant space and it is set to open in the first half of 2024 by developers Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield. The scheme will expand the Hamburg City metropolitan area by 40 per cent and the proportion of public and publicly accessible private open spaces is 38 per cent.

Under construction by Athens-based firm Lamda Development, The Ellinikon Park is slated to be Europe's greatest urban regeneration project and a large portion of the park is due for completion in 2025. One section – the Experience Park – is already open to the public after launching in December last year. Once completed, the larger than Hyde Park in London, two million square metre The Ellinikon Park along the Athenian Riviera will be able to handle over 500,000 visitors a day. A main attraction will be a 56m wide promenade connecting Vouliagmeni Avenue with the coastal front through The Ellinikon. Developers expect the park will have multiple benefits contributing to the improved standard of living, to the microclimate and the environment and serving

as a main tourist attraction. Situated within the scheme will be the exquisite world of Riviera Galleria, with over 20,000sq m of deluxe shopping, exceptional dining and first-class entertainment space, the most premium retail scene in Greece will become the jewel of the Athenian Riviera attracting visitors from all over the world.

Battersea might be the last of the great UK shopping centres to open, if it is, it would be quite a scheme to end on. The power station opened on 14 October 2022 and is a modern mix of over 100 stores, dining, leisure, medical, wellness, co-working and offices. The original control rooms in both the 1930s and 1950s sides are being retailed to serve as cool dining/drinking locations and the architecture unsurprisingly, is the star. The power station is at the heart of a much wider redevelopment of the south west London site, with several stages of its residential and convenience retail and leisure plans already complete and a new London Underground station open. However, the iconic power station will inevitably be the standout. Control Room B, built in the 1950s and featuring stainless-steel control panels arranged in an arc is to become a fashionable bar on reopening. Brands including Ray-Ban, Ralph Lauren, Tommy Hilfiger, The Kooples, Aesop and Calvin Klein will be opening among more than 100 shops, bars and restaurants, 254 apartments, office space as well as a leisure offering that includes the Chimney Lift experience. Developed by Battersea Power Station Development Company, the scheme is also home a new six-acre riverfront that is open to the public.

Developer Argent Related has announced the sales launch of the first, highly anticipated homes at Brent Cross Town, London's 180-acre, £7bn new park town. Overlooking five acres of open green space, The



Shibuya Upper West Project, Tokyo, Japan
Architects: Snøhetta, Nikken Sekkei Ltd & Tokyu Architects
Developer: Tokyu Group

Ashbee and The Delamarre will together offer 277 new homes featuring timeless design and superior quality. The first phase of the development, Claremont Park and a new parade of local shops opened in spring 2022. Construction is also underway on the new Brent Cross West station, with construction set to be completed imminently. The first phases will also include around 1,000 new homes for sale and rent, as well as affordable homes, up to one million square feet of offices, new sport and play facilities, shops and restaurants and a new primary school.

Located off Lusail City in Qatar, Qetaifan Island North by Qetaifan Projects was designed to be Qatar's future iconic destination. The project spans approximately 1.3 million square meters, with 129,296sq m of waterpark alone. The island also features exciting entertainment attractions that the whole family can enjoy, in addition to diversified waterfronts, distinct neighbourhoods, luxurious hotels, pedestrian friendly streets, living gardens and world-class facilities that make it a modern, globally-competitive community with a unique design that is inspired by the rich culture and nature of the region. The retail services on the island include F&B, edutainment and entertainment in addition to the souq, a market inspired by the Qatari culture that overlooks the Linear Park, offering a unique shopping experience for the whole family. The entertainment landmark was fully inaugurated at the landmark FIFA World Cup 2022 in November.

Oman Tourism Development Company (Omran) and Diamond Developers have joined forces to develop a world-class, mixed use project that meets the highest standards of social, environmental and economic sustainability, the tourism project called Yiti. The two

companies have formed a joint venture called Sustainable Development Investment Company (SDIC) and the agreement will see the development of the first phase of the Yiti Tourism masterplan. The first phase of the Yiti project will cover an area of one million square metres and will focus on constructing the sultanate's first fully sustainable mixed-use project. This phase will include green public spaces, residencies, tourism, commercial and educational facilities, all tied together with well-balanced and integrated components. Visitors and residents will be able to enjoy a variety of lifestyle experiences such as restaurants, cafés, shops, an equestrian centre and a farm. The project is slated for completion by 2025.

Overlooking the Arabian Gulf 's crystal blue waters, Bahrain Marina links Manama's business hubs, traditional souqs, touristic and cultural districts. Bahrain Marina is designed to be a beautiful waterfront offering with limitless possibilities for each and every individual. With no opening date yet, the upcoming development by Bahrain Marina Development Company, Bahrain Marina is a place where people can strengthen their relationships with their community and reinforce their social and professional connections. One part of the overall development is the Boardwalk Shopping, where visitors can enjoy a unique shopping experience along the coast with outlets to compliment the Bahrain Marina lifestyle. A wide range of shops and stores are dotted along the boardwalk overlooking the sea, allowing an unparalleled experience unlike any other. With over a thousand parking spaces and an ample view of the water, seaside shopping is an exciting new concept for Bahrain's retail sector, creating a serene getaway.



The Sustainable City, YITI, Doha, Qatar
Developers: Oman Tourism Development Company (Omran) and Diamond Developers



Battersea Power Station, London, UK
Architect: WilkinsonEyre
Developer: Battersea Power Station Development Company



AZAD PROPERTIES LAUNCHED ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PIONEERING PROJECTS IN JEDDAH



Under the generous patronage of His Royal Highness, Governor of Makkah Al-Mukarramah Region, Advisor to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques Prince / Khaled Al-Faisal, may God protect him and the honour of the Governor of Jeddah, His Highness Prince Saud bin Jalawi, may God protect him, Azad Properties inaugurated one of the most important pioneering projects in Jeddah, the "Souq7" commercial project, at a ceremony. It was attended by Their Highnesses, Excellencies, senior investors and merchants in its strategic location in the southeast of the city in Al Jamea district, Kilo 7, surrounded by the most important economic engines such as King Abdulaziz University and a number of prestigious hospitals, in addition to being located next to the Al-Haramain train station, announcing the imminent opening of the first phase in the coming month of Sha'ban.

This stage includes the opening of various specialized showrooms in the home and electronics zones out of the seven zones to be established in the project.

The idea of Souq7 is based on filling the growing market gap, the demand from consumers for multi-use open markets, with an enjoyable shopping atmosphere that brings back memories of the beautiful time in the in a renewed and safe way, to be one of Jeddah's landmarks as a shopping destination that meets the needs of its residents and visitors and a shopping atmosphere full of suspense. Fun, events and distinct architectural designs that tell the story of the past and the modernity of the present, inspire the future generation and create beautiful times and memories.

Souq7 provides seven main activities distributed over seven different main zones harmoniously. At the forefront of these commercial activities are F&B, furnishings, home and electronic appliances, fashion, a gold market and a heritage market that carries the fragrance of the past. Souq7 is located in the city of Jeddah and is renowned for its expansive complex of cafes, restaurants, entertainment, a cinema and 5 platforms for hosting events and entertainment activities. The area spans over 50,000 square meters and also includes a hotel, health clinics and commercial offices. Moreover, Souq7 offers a wide selection of automotive and building materials activities in a modern, efficient manner that meets the requirements of both individuals and families, bringing a unique atmosphere to the overall environment.

The idea of Souq7 is based on filling the growing market gap, the demand from consumers for multi-use open markets

Azad Properties is keen to operate Souq7 using the latest administrative and technological methods, by providing a central control room for the entire project and providing smart monitoring systems to identify individuals and vehicles and monitor internal traffic. Smart gates will also be used to help regulate traffic, which will be linked to the systems, government security and the provision of environmentally friendly and energy-saving systems.



It is worth noting that the rental rate reached 70% of the total rental space and among the most important commercial names that signed agreements with Fitness Time in the multi-use area, Masdar Company in the building materials area, noting that the work is still based on attracting many other distinctive brands to meet the needs of visitors and visitors to Souq7.

Briefly touching on the remaining stages of Souq7 that are about to complete the joy of market visitors, we find them in optimistic ratios and numbers, as the development rate for the first phase (the home and electronics zones) reached 100% and the development rate in the car area reached more than 40% and the development rate in the fashion zone, more than 29%, as for the building materials zone, the percentage reached 15% and 10% in the F&B zone.

Last but not least, Azad has developed this huge project with infrastructure according to the highest international standards on an area of more than 700,000 square meters with a rental area of more than 400,000 square meters, hosting more than 4,000 various stores distributed over 114 buildings, at an estimated cost of 1.5 billion. Saudi Riyal, aims to achieve annual retail sales of more than 2 billion Saudi riyals and to create more than 24,000 jobs for Saudi Arabia's young men and women, with the aim of joining and contributing to the Saudi economy's march towards a promising vision.

The Souq7 project comes within a series of pioneering projects that Azad properties intend to launch with a modern, distinguished and innovative character, inspired by the ambitious vision of His Highness the Crown Prince for our beloved Kingdom 2030 in providing everything that serves its residents and visitors and enriches the quality of life.

www.azad.com.sa

Signs of a Strong Recovery

Last year was a positive one for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as its retail sector highlighted that it was recovering well after some difficult times. Combined with the fact its real estate market is expected to register a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of almost ten per cent during 2022-2027 and the future is looking good for the Kingdom. Here, RLI takes a look at a selection of retail real estate schemes that are ensuring a return to pre-pandemic times and those that are aiming to make the future even brighter.

Saudi Arabia's retail sector saw an increase in space and a strong recovery in domestic demand during the first half of 2022 as pandemic restrictions have eased, a report by the real estate management firm JLL showed.

Relaxations in Covid-19 restrictions have triggered a recovery in domestic demand for retail in Saudi Arabia, which has led to a significant increase in retail space in the Kingdom. Riyadh currently has 3.3 million square metres of retail area, followed by Jeddah, which went from 16,000 to 1.7 million square metres and Makkah, which increased from 17,500 to 1.4 million square metres in the first six months of 2022. With lesser travel restrictions, Saudi Arabia is expected to meet its goal of attracting 12 million foreign visitors, which will boost retail sales further.

According to JLL's latest Global Real Estate Transparency Index, the Kingdom maintained its position in the top 50 global rankings, boosting its position at a regional level. It ranked 49 on the index and following an excellent 2022, the outlook for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia looks very encouraging for 2023 and beyond. The projects highlighted below are just a microcosm of what is happening across this unique region.

Projects Across the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Shumoul Holding Co. (Shumoul), a subsidiary which is 55 per cent owned by Kuwaiti developer Mabanee and 45 per cent owned by Al Fozan Holding, is undertaking the construction of a mixed-use complex in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The project involves the construction of 1.7 million square metre mixed-use complex on a 390,000sq m area and being developed in multiple phases. The project includes the construction of a shopping mall, a five-star hotel and a four-star hotel both consisting a total of 500 rooms, the residential building comprising 1,050 units, medical building including 240 medical clinics, office space, commercial facilities, 18,000 vehicle parking spaces and related facilities. The first phase of the scheme was inaugurated last year, with the company saying the scope of work for phase one of The Avenues – Riyadh comprised the mall, parking area, gardens and internal roads.

Being developed by Azad Properties and on course to open this year after the initial launch ceremony took place recently, the Souq7 development in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia celebrates legacy and culture in an entirely reimagined souq setup. It reflects modernity and innovation in

line with Vision 2030, while also embracing the Middle East's originality, stimulating the senses and inciting a sense of discovery. Following the "one-stop-shop" motto where shoppers can find anything and everything they want under one roof, Souq7 will be divided into seven main zones coming together in a beautiful mosaic that forms an all-encompassing lifestyle and retail space. The zones are food stuff zone, the family entertainment zone, an electronics zone, furniture & home supplies zone, building material zone, automotive zone and a multi-use zone. Spreading over 728,000sq m of space, Souq7 will feature 4,000 shops, around 7,000 parking spaces, 108 buildings and five mosques.

1364 will be a world-class shopping, dining and entertainment centre that offers Saudi society a place to express and fulfil their modern desires. The 1364 shopping centre will be a location as unique as the Diplomatic Quarter itself, with extensive greenery and water features to ensure that the project is an extension and continuation of the Diplomatic Quarter, with well blended contemporary architectural practices and a modern, attractive merchandise mix to attract young professionals and families from all over Riyadh. Set to bustle with energy and activity, day and night; there will always be something new for guests to discover at the 1364 site, from live music, casual bites, play areas and an extensive cultural scene, 1364 springs to life, offering ever-changing activities for families and trendy meeting places that create the ultimate social scene. The scheme is scheduled to open in the last quarter of this year by developer Unified Real Estate Development Co.

An unrivalled lifestyle opportunity, The Bellevue by developer Unified Real Estate & Development Company is Riyadh's largest mixed-use masterplanned project, located over 100,000sq m within Riyadh's booming northern corridor. Envisioned as a new epicentre of suburban culture and industry, Bellevue is a place for like-minded people to live, work, shopping, learn and play. At the heart of Bellevue will be a major retail and lifestyle hub, offering a varied and evolving mix of shopping, dining, civic and cultural experiences over 90,000sq m of proposed floorspace. Their vision will be delivered over a multi-year horizon as they grow with the community of Bellevue and the surrounding burgeoning region and it all starts this year.

Recent CGIs of the Knowledge Entertainment City Hub bring to life how this 392,000sq m mixed-use district in Madinah, Saudi Arabia, will undoubtedly become one of the top visitor destinations in the world. Under development by Knowledge Economic City, the KEC Hub is an exciting and dynamic urban district offering the largest and most diverse shopping, dining and entertainment venue as part of the wider masterplan, for this globally significant pilgrimage destination. The development's 129,000sq m shopping and entertainment centre includes a series of glass-covered atria and streets containing a range of shops, restaurants, cafes, a cinema, family entertainment centres and a wellness clinic. A vibrant, open-air restaurant boulevard provides a pedestrianised, family-friendly dining experience and a central civic square will provide spaces for events and relaxation, shops, restaurants



North Riyadh Mall, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Developer: Majid Al Futtaim



Jeddah City Mall, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Developer: Jeddah Econmic Company

and cafés. KEC Hub also delivers a 350-key, five-star hotel and 65 branded residences for the Hilton brand. The design concept for KEC Hub by Chapman Taylor was inspired by the charm and character of the traditional arabesque architectural style of the region. The construction of this socially and economically significant development began in 2021, with the scheme to be completed in mid-2024.

The Madinah Gate project is part of the Knowledge Entertainment City Hub and is being designed as the first development project linked to a railway station in the Kingdom and the project will include a four-star hotel tower to be operated by HDT (Hilton Double Tree), with 275 hotel keys, 50 suites & serviced apartments along with 23,000sq m retail space that is connected to the train station and bus station. DLR Group has been appointed as a leading consultant on this project as one of the leading architects and designers in similar projects around the world.

Still under construction by Jeddah Economic Company and lined strategically along the coastline of the Red Sea, Jeddah Economic City is design to embody a new point of view in what a mega city is all about. The City in mind is planned to breathe life into the Northern area of Jeddah, attracting investors, tourists, as well as business opportunities that will break global records, becoming the first of its kind in city life. Planned to occupy a spectacular area of 5.3 million square meters of land, the Jeddah Economic City is envisioned to reflect a new era in urban development and living, providing the inhabiting community with all that is needed in amenities, facilities, residential quarters, business areas in shops and commercial centres, in addition to diplomatic quarters. The Super Regional mall, to be called Jeddah City Mall and due to open in 2024 and be 490,000sq m in size, will be carefully designed within the City grid, laced with the convenience of restaurants, cafes, public parks, in addition to the

routes connecting them, resulting in the perfect shopping experience to all commuters, tourists, visitors and business people alike.

Jawharat Jeddah mall is one of the modern centres in the city of Jeddah, which aims to establish a diversified centre as a new and integrated destination for entertainment and shopping with the latest international brands. Set to open in the first quarter of next year by developers Cenomi Centers, Jawharat Jeddah Mall will be built on a land area of 170,746sq m and include a GLA of 87,145sq m. The entertainment on site will be spread over 17,475sq m and the mall will include more than 200 stores and have space for over 3,000 cars.

Another mall being constructed by Cenomi Centers is Jawharat Riyadh, which will be the latest and most modern destinations for the residents of Riyadh and will contain the most luxurious international brands with areas dedicated to entertainment to improve and enrich the experience of visitors in the market centres. This mall is being developed on a land area of 505,509sq m and will have a GLA of 148,389sq m. Set to open in the quarter of 2025, the mall will feature an entertainment area of almost 40,000sq m, be home to more than 350 international, regional and local brands and have space for more than 6,000 cars.

Saudi mall developer Arabian Centres Company (ACC) has signed a lease and investment agreement to develop Jawharat Al-Khobar Mall and mixed-use commercial facilities (hotel and offices) on 300,000sq m of land located north of Al-Khobar city in Al-Kurnaish district. The company said in a stock exchange statement that it plans to build the mall in the coming six months with a budgeted development cost of between \$266M to \$346M. The mall will have between 130,000 to 150,000sq m of gross leasing area (GLA). The upcoming development is anticipated to open between the second half of 2025 and the first half of 2026.



Knowledge Economic City Hub, Madinah, Saudi Arabia
Developer: Knowledge Economic City



Souq7, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Developer: Azad Properties

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21 Bruton St, Mayfair
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www.aranyani.com



Solitaire, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Developer: Al-Marqab Investment Company

Dubai's Majid Al Futtaim has signed an agreement with global infrastructure consulting firm AECOM to help mastermind the development of the retailer's North Riyadh Mall, its flagship project in the Kingdom which is scheduled for opening in 2026. AECOM will be the lead design consultancy on the project and supervise construction of the mall, which is expected to consist of about 600 stores across 300,000sq m of gross leasable area. At present, half of the space has been reserved by retailers. North Riyadh Mall will also include the largest ski slope and snow park in the Middle East, luxury hotels and branded residences covering about 2,000 keys and on a 214,000sq m area. The mall will also include a Carrefour hypermarket and 31 VOX Cinema screens, including the world's largest IMAX and a Magic Planet.

Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund (PIF) has revealed its plans for THE RIG, a tourism project inspired by offshore oil platforms, which will be located in the Arabian Gulf, 40km from land. THE RIG project will span an area of more than 150,000sq m and provide a multitude of hospitality offerings, adventures and aquatic sporting experiences. It is part of PIF's strategy 2021-2025 to further strengthen Saudi Arabia's international entertainment and tourism offering. This project is a unique tourism attraction, expected to attract tourists from around the world while being especially popular with citizens and residents of the GCC countries in the region, the PIF said. It will feature a number of touristic attractions, including three hotels, 11 world-class restaurants, 800 hotel rooms, helipads and a range of adventurous activities, including extreme sports. The first tenders on the scheme were launched in Q2 last year but to date no opening date has been announced.

Solitaire by developers Al-Marqab Investment Company is set to be Riyadh's newest multi-use lifestyle destination and will consist of three aboveground levels of retail, food and beverage, entertainment, wellness

and sport offerings and three levels of basement parking. Within the city of Riyadh, Solitaire will occupy a 60,000sq m area bordered by King Abdulaziz Rd, Al Imam Saud Ibn Faisal Road and Al Thumamah Road. Directly opposite is the Kingdom Hospital and views to the south reveal the prestigious King Abdullah Financial District, affirming this prime location within the city. The North Ring Road is just 2km away, making the asset easily accessible from Riyadh's outer suburbs. As a multi-use lifestyle destination with design work by Benoy, Solitaire's focus is on providing a unique, 360° lifestyle offering encompassing the key areas of retail, dining, entertainment, wellness and sport. An opening date has not yet been announced.

Infiniti is set to be a timeless destination for upscale 360° lifestyle experiences. Specializing in building high-end modern developments, ranging from residential to commercial, Ajdan brings contemporary luxury living to the most prominent locations in Saudi Arabia, the GCC, and beyond. With a sharp eye for state-of-the-art design and an unwavering commitment to creating spaces that bring the outdoors inward, Ajdan is at the forefront of innovation in MENA real estate. The towers have been designed with each and every resident in mind, giving all residential units a view of the Arabian Gulf; rest assured knowing that the sea will accompany you all throughout your day. Each tower is complete with an infinity pool and modern landscape design. With 45,510sq m of property, an upscale F&B area, contemporary high-end residential towers and cutting-edge amenities, we've designed a living destination that puts your mind at ease. Situated in AlBahar District, Khobar, you'll find yourself right amidst the liveliness of the new downtown with exciting destinations like SEVEN Entertainment, Dhahran Expo and Saudi Aramco. An opening date for the scheme is yet to be announced.



THE RIG, Arabian Gulf, Saudi Arabia
Developer: PIF



Jawharat Al Khobar, Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia
Developer: Arabian Centres Company

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A Vision Like No Other

The Saudi Vision 2030 was announced by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in 2016 and seeks to transform Saudi Arabia to diversify the largest economy in the Middle East away from its historic dependence on oil. Over the coming pages RLI will take a closer look at the five major giga-projects under construction across KSA as well as a selection of mega-projects that are also being built in the Kingdom.

The Saudi Arabia giga-project program is the world's largest civil infrastructure engineering program covering the development of residential, industrial and tourism projects in the Kingdom. The program is the centrepiece of the Saudi Arabia 2030 Vision aimed at transforming the Kingdom into a tourism and entertainment hub while creating hundreds of thousands of new jobs.

These upcoming giga-projects are designed to create new ecosystems, unlock new sectors and are heavily enabled by and promote technology and knowledge in Saudi Arabia. The idea behind them is to stimulate the economy and their benefits are expected to expand significantly beyond the real estate and infrastructure sectors, helping to diversify the economy away from oil, especially given their sheer scale. They support the Kingdom's economic transformation efforts and promote investments in several sectors, while achieving high returns over the medium and long terms.

The Five Saudi Arabian Giga-Projects Diriyah

As part of the Kingdom's 2030 Vision, the Diriyah Gate Development Authority (DGDA) is transforming Diriyah into what will become the world's largest cultural and heritage destination. Located 15 minutes from Riyadh, Diriyah will become the world's largest cultural and lifestyle mud city. Celebrating 300 years of Saudi Arabian history and heritage, Diriyah is destined to become a world-class lifestyle destination with Saudi's greatest collection of museums and cultural attractions, luxury international hotels and resorts and luxury retail, leisure and dining experiences. Built in the fifteenth century and listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2010, it was here that Diriyah's ruling family lived under the leadership of Imam Mohammad bin Saud, the forefather of Saudi Arabia's current King, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. A SAR 65bn cultural and lifestyle development, inspired by the timeless Najdi architecture of At-Turaif,

Diriyah is the ancestral home of the Royal Family of Al Saud, the birthplace of the Kingdom. In December last year the first element of the giga-project launched to the public, that of Bujairi Terrace, a collection of 21 globally renowned restaurants over a 15,000sq m area. The historical area and the birthplace of the Kingdom houses the exciting new restaurant hub and meshes together rich culture, modernity and world-class dining. On full completion, Diriyah will become Saudi's premier lifestyle destination to visit, live, work, shop, dine and celebrate the wonder of the Kingdom's rich heritage and culture.

NEOM

Launched in 2017 by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and with a name that means "new future", NEOM stands as the flagship project of Vision 2030 and post-oil diversification plans. As a \$500bn mega-city of the future, it aims to become an international hub for a wide range of sectors and services. Completion is scheduled for 2030, but with a 26,500sq km site and 450km of coastline, growth and development of the area is expected to continue well beyond then. Located on the north-western edge of Saudi Arabia, the site is in proximity to Egypt, Jordan and Israel and eventually aims to incorporate territory from neighbouring countries. The region has particularly favourable climatic conditions, with temperatures roughly 10° cooler than the GCC average. NEOM, which is 5,000-year-old region, connects three continents – Asia, Africa and Europe – will see 95 per cent of the whole land transformed to be a nature reserve. Saudi Arabia's NEOM has released what visitors can expect, according to the latest facts shared by the city's chief executive officer Nadhmi Al-Nasr. According to Al-Nasr, NEOM is currently developing 15 islands as phase 1, followed by a full mobility system, the "largest marina on Earth" and is also

focused on renewable energy. The three mega-projects NEOM is focused on is The Line, Oxagon and Trojena would reportedly generate an estimated 380,000 jobs and add SAR180 billion to the overall GDP of the Kingdom.

Qiddiya

Qiddiya, a multi-billion-dollar entertainment destination in Riyadh, is set to be the world's largest entertainment city. Qiddiya will be a disruptive destination recognised on the world stage as the home of the most innovative and immersive experiences. Its wide range of offerings will be based on the five cornerstones of sports & wellness; nature & environment; parks & attractions; motion & mobility and arts & culture, making Qiddiya the capital of entertainment, sports and the arts, not just in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, but of the world. Family-friendly theme parks, sports arenas suitable for international competitions, academies for sports and the arts, concert and entertainment venues, racetracks for motorsport enthusiasts as well as outdoor and adventure activities alongside nature and environment experiences are just some of the fun attractions being developed. Qiddiya will also include a variety of real estate options and community services. In short, Qiddiya will be a place that enables the youth of Saudi Arabia to fulfil their ambitions. It will be a place where they enjoy, appreciate, aspire, advance and nurture their potential; a place that unlocks opportunities and new professional pathways to help build a more prosperous and progressive society. Qiddiya is being created to provide the youthful society of Saudi Arabia with opportunities in entertainment, sports and the arts, whilst capturing the imagination of the world. By unlocking new professional pathways and catalysing the development of creative industries, Qiddiya will be known as a place of innovation and inspiration.



NEOM, Saudi Arabia
Developer: PIF

ROSHN

Unlike Saudi's other giga-projects, ROSHN is delivering new urban communities across the kingdom. Backed by the PIF, the real estate developer is creating its communities in cities such as Riyadh, Jeddah, Al Kharj, Al Hofuf, Al Qatif, Makkah and Abha. These feature pedestrian-friendly 'living streets', green spaces and retail and entertainment outlets, as well as hospitals, medical centres, mosques and sports facilities. Having been established in 2019 by Saudi Arabia's sovereign Public Investment Fund (PIF), ROSHN specialises in developing integrated urban neighbourhoods featuring residential communities with modern standards across the Kingdom. The idea behind the project's launch was to meet the demand for new housing supply while developing integrated neighbourhoods, localising international best practices, incorporating the latest technologies in construction and enhancing the quality of life. As a Saudi giga-project, ROSHN creates comprehensive communities to elevate the standards of living in Saudi Arabia and contributes to the objectives of VISION 2030, including enhancing the quality of life for the Kingdom's residents. Soon after launching in November 2020, the real estate giant unveiled its first project, a community in Riyadh. Spread across 20sq km, the megaproject comprises more than 30,000 homes and is an integral part of ROSHN's 10-year mandate to develop communities across the Kingdom. In August 2021, the project was named "SEDRA". The mega development is strategically located north of Riyadh, south of King Khalid Airport and within close proximity to Princess Nourah University. The giga-project also aims to raise the rate

of homeownership to 70 per cent in the country and the design of SEDRA is inspired by Salmani architecture.

The Red Sea

Red Sea Global is behind The Red Sea, another giga-project in Saudi Arabia with a focus on eco-tourism. The Red Sea is a crossroad of land and sea with a rich cultural backdrop full of fascinating history. Formerly known as the Red Sea Project, The Red Sea is on track to welcome its first visitors in 2023. It is billed as the world's most sustainable luxury tourism destination. With plans to become the world's most responsible developer, Red Sea Global is exploring and implementing ideas such as green concrete to limit emissions, clean mobility strategies and sustainable food production. The destination will, of course, be powered by 100 per cent renewable energy. In 2021, Red Sea Global partnered with biotechnology firm Blue Planet Ecosystems (BPE) to produce seafood sustainably on-site. Directly employing 35,000 people, the project showcases the landscape and rich cultural heritage of the Red Sea Coast. Upon completion in 2030, the destination will comprise 50 resorts, offering up to 8,000 hotel rooms and more than 1,000 residential properties across 22 islands and six inland sites. The destination will also include luxury marinas, golf courses, entertainment, leisure facilities and an international airport. The project is being developed over 28,000sq km along Saudi Arabia's west coast including more than 90 islands. The site also features mountain canyons, dormant volcanoes and ancient cultural and heritage sites. The destination will include hotels, residential



The Red Sea, Saudi Arabia
Developer: The Red Sea Development Company



Qiddiya, Saudi Arabia
Developer: PIF

properties, leisure, commercial and entertainment amenities, as well as supporting infrastructure that emphasizes renewable energy and water conservation and re-use.

Mega-Projects Under Construction

Saudi Arabia is one of, if not the most, ambitious countries in the world and away from the five headline giga-projects that are under development, there are a number of mega-projects that are also part of the Saudi Arabia Vision 2030. These mega-projects are set to change not only the Kingdom's landscape but in many cases, the day-to-day lives of residents too.

AlUla is at the forefront of the Vision 2030 plan initiated by the Saudi government to modernise the country, with the project part of a series of major schemes to diversify its economy and raise its profile from an international perspective. AlUla is being developed as a living museum and a global destination for history, heritage, cultural and ecotourism with an emphasis on sustainability and community-inclusivity, offering visitors an immersive and responsible experience. The region encompasses more than 200,000 years of unexplored human history including the Nabataean city of Hegra, Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site; the ancient North Arabian Dadanite and Lihyanite Kingdoms, whose scripts contributed to the evolution of the Arabic language; and AlUla Old Town, a stopping point for pilgrims from 1100CE.

Meanwhile the AMAALA mega-project along the Red Sea, in the Tabuk province, will border the city of NEOM and The Red Sea within

the Prince Mohammed bin Salman Natural Reserve, helping to establish a new luxury tourism destination. AMAALA will be home to more than 3,000 hotel rooms across 25 hotels. It will also boast 900 residential properties and retail, dining and wellness facilities. In September 2022 it was announced that more than 300 construction contracts worth in excess of \$1.7bn have been signed to date. AMAALA is due to complete in 2027. Its first phase, Triple Bay, is scheduled to finish in 2024. It includes eight resorts with more than 1,300 hotel rooms and it will be a place where guests will be able to reach new levels of wellbeing with its holistic, comprehensive wellness offer.

The Saudi Arabian government has announced plans to build a new mega project, a 400-metre-high cube-shaped skyscraper named Mukaab as part of its Murabba downtown plan in Riyadh. Set to be built to the northwest of central Riyadh, the 19sq km development is being planned as a new downtown area for the Saudi capital city. Described as the "new face of Riyadh", it will be built around the Mukaab structure, which will be "one of the largest built structures in the world". It will contain two million square metres of shops, cultural and tourist attractions and have an almost full-height atrium space that will contain a spiralling tower. The Mukaab skyscraper forms part of the wider Murabba district announced by Saudi crown prince Mohammad bin Salman, chairman of the newly formed New Murabba Development Company. The wider development will contain over 100,000 residential units and 9,000 hotel rooms along with more than 980,000sq m of shops and 1.4 million square metres of office space when it is fully open in 2030.



ROSHN, Saudi Arabia
Developer: PIF



MIPIM INSIGHT

Creating a Sustainable Future

The latest edition of MIPIM will take place across the 14-17 March in Cannes, France and it is set to attract 23,000 delegates from over 90 countries, a 15 per cent increase from the 2022 edition. Ahead of this global gathering, RLI spends the next few pages examining a selection of projects from around the world that highlight how mixed-use schemes continue to be the way forward for developers.

In crafting a unique urban festival during four days in Cannes, MIPIM influences and accelerates the transformation of the built environment. It is a catalyst for concrete solutions, combining face-to-face discussions, thought leadership, development opportunities and global capital to drive change. It connects and inspires the international real estate community to create more sustainable, liveable and prosperous places for all.

A growing list of European and international exhibitors has confirmed their participation at MIPIM, the world's largest international real estate event. The conference program will be centred on the theme: 'Better Places - Greater Impact - Stronger Business'. This program will put the spotlight on ESG, innovation and technology solutions able to accelerate the transformation of the built environment towards a more sustainable model. MIPIM 2023 will feature six new stages, including the Road to

Zero Stage which is focused on pragmatic approaches to decarbonising the real estate industry. Another new stage will be the Infrastructure Stage which will bring into sharp focus the impact of transport, water, data centres, waste and culture on real estate. The Leaders' Perspective Stage is focused on keynote speeches from those making waves in the industry, while The Asset Class Stage looks into individual sectors to see in which direction the market is heading. Meanwhile The Geo Focus Stage examines specific local markets and The Make It Happen Stage will feature conversations about use cases and collaboration.

Another new addition at the event this year is the International Summit which is being launched in response to the growth in alternative ways of living within the residential asset class. The MIPIM Co-Liv Summit which is taking place on Monday 13 March will moving forward become a yearly event to bring together the sector's leading players.

Taking place alongside the four-day gathering is the MIPIM Awards 2023, which features 43 finalists in the globally-renowned real estate competition for completed or yet to be built projects around the world. In addition to the usual criteria, this year the jury focused on how projects seek to enhance the built environment's prospects in line with ESG goals. The six key criteria are sustainability, integration of the project in its environment and community, quality of the user experience, economic contribution, originality of the concept and architectural qualities.

Nicolas Kozubek, MIPIM Director, said: "MIPIM continues to provide an unrivalled opportunity to access and unlock significant global capital, as evidenced by the number of cities and investors committed to the 2023 event. MIPIM shows us the value of in-person, face-to-face discussions and meetings which are unique components for conducting business and securing vital investment. Together with our delegates, I look forward to discussing the best solutions to overcome the challenges our cities face whilst driving forward the real estate industry in what will be a crucial year for securing investment and delivering major projects and regeneration schemes. This spring, we anticipate welcoming more delegates to Cannes than last year, driven by strong growth in our main markets in Europe but also including more people from the rest of the world. MIPIM will become a truly global event in 2023 with the participation of delegations from major international cities and regions, including those from Japan, Canada, the US, Brazil, Turkey, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Egypt."

Global Schemes Americas

Gaw Capital USA, a Hong Kong and Los Angeles-based real estate

private equity firm, together with DJM, a San Jose and Los Angeles-based private equity real estate developer, have relaunched the famed shopping centre at Hollywood & Highland, which included a major design update and new name, Ovation Hollywood. After construction began back in 2021 and upon completion in phases last year, Ovation Hollywood has been transformed into a vibrant, mixed-use destination that includes 135,000sq ft of retail, two floors of nearly 100,000sq ft of creative office space, 85,000sq ft of dining, 65,000sq ft of entertainment space and 40,000sq ft of event space. With an emphasis on a refreshed tenant mix and updated merchandising, DJM leant into their retail expertise to bring an updated tenant mix to the property.

A project under development by Thor Urbana is The Landmark Tijuana, which is a project that is located in the Golden Zone, the area with the highest real estate growth in the city of Tijuana in Mexico. On course to open in spring this year, the Landmark Tijuana will bring together the best shopping, dining and entertainment offerings unlike anywhere else in the area. It will be complemented by an exclusive residential tower, luxury hotel and class A+ office spaces to become the new place to live, work and play. The lifestyle centre will feature 308,000sq ft of leasable area, whilst the surround facilities within the scheme will include 154,000sq ft of A+ office space, 190 residences, a brand new hotel with over 200 rooms, more than 2,000 car parking spaces and all this will open to the public in spring of next year. The upcoming project will offer a unique mixture of cultural diversity from the region, integrating itself into an existing, bicultural, vibrant community in search of exceptional experiences. The Landmark Tijuana will transform the lifestyle of every person who has the chance to experience this most innovative development in northern Mexico.



Westfield Garden State Plaza, New Jersey, US
Developers: Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield & Mill Creek Residential

Work is continuing on the massive mixed-use community set for Dupont and Dufferin Streets in the west end and new renderings and details offer a glimpse at what the project, which will stand where the now-demolished Galleria Mall once stood, will look like once completed. The masterplanned community, called Galleria on the Park by developer Elad Canada, will feature eight residential towers in the midst of the pedestrian-oriented district, with 2,846 units of different types and sizes in the pipeline. The community is also set to host roughly 300,000sq ft of retail space for boutiques and shops, a large portion of which will be located inside the 31-storey residential tower Galleria III. Outdoor patios with seating and umbrellas will also be available to pedestrians walking through the area and a nearby Privately-Owned-Publicly accessible Space (POPS) called Points Plaza will be the main focal point of the development when it opens in 2024.

Launched back in 2020 by developer Fisher Brothers, AREA15

has confirmed plans to expand its district in Las Vegas by 20 acres, providing a destination where people can “come, enjoy, consume, eat, party, dance and stay”. The anchor tenant will be a year-round eerie experience from Universal Parks & Resorts inspired by Halloween Horror Nights. Universal’s horror experience will occupy more than 110,000sq ft in a standalone building. In addition, more than 85,000sq ft will be dedicated to pop-ups and outdoor experiences. This will be joined by additional attractions, entertainment, retail and F&B. The new development extends beyond AREA15’s main complex, home to attractions including Meow Wolf’s Omega Mart, Illuminarium and Lost Spirits Distillery. As part of the expansion AREA15 is looking for tenants offering immersive experiences, attractions, curated retail, unique entertainment and exciting F&B outlets. The expansion will include more than 450,000sq ft of space, with tenant leasing opportunities ranging from 1,000sq ft to 60,000sq ft. AREA15 is breaking ground on



Galleria on the Park, Toronto, Canada
Developer: Elad Canada



Boston's Allston Neighbourhood, Boston, Massachusetts, US
Developer: Allston LabWorks

the expansion in the next six months and it will be turned over to the tenants in mid-2024.

Allston Labworks is a new life science campus along Lower Allston's Western Avenue innovation corridor. Surrounded by Allston's eclectic culture and thriving art scene, Allston Labworks will provide life science companies and the greater Allston community with new creative outlets for exploration and self-expression. The new mixed-use life science campus that includes housing and retail will be a welcome addition to Boston's expanding lab market. JLL has secured \$585M in financing for the construction of a 580,905sq ft development in Boston's Allston neighbourhood. Allston LabWorks, located on 4.27 acres at 250, 280 and 305 Western Avenue, will be comprised of a life sciences, retail and multi-housing space. Once the project is complete, it will feature 534,000sq ft of lab space; 20,000sq ft of retail space;

35 multi-housing units, 26 per cent of which will be affordable. It will also include a 12,000sq ft public plaza with an additional 5,000sq ft landscaped open space and 668 garage parking spaces. Delivery on the project is expected across 2024 and 2025.

Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield (URW) has announced Mill Creek Residential (MCR) as co-developer for the first phase of the landmark transformation of Westfield Garden State Plaza in Bergen County, New Jersey. Anticipated to break ground in 2024 and slated to open to residents in 2026, the first phase will include the construction of 550 luxury apartment homes that will be integrated with the shopping centre via a one-acre 'green town' for residents, visitors and shoppers to enjoy, as well as introduce a 'main street' outdoor district featuring restaurants and everyday conveniences and services. The development will also include significant community and sustainability features such as new parks and greenspaces, green building construction, upgraded connectivity to public transportation networks, electric vehicle charging stations and the restoration of a section of the beloved local Sprout Brook. Aligned with this vision, Garden State Plaza will be completely reimagined, with surface parking areas to the west of the shopping centre converted into modern luxury apartment homes, plazas, parks, gardens, health and wellness amenities, commercial office space, as well as a transit centre – alongside new outdoor shops, restaurants and community event spaces. The centre will appeal to shoppers and residents alike: the perfect place to find the latest fashions, enjoy premier dining, socialise, take a walk or ride a bike, enjoy concerts and cultural festivals and so much more.



Ovation Hollywood, Los Angeles, US
Developers: Gaw Capital USA & DJM



Zhuhai Shizimen Huafa Mall, Phase 2, Zhuhai, China
Developer: Zhuhai Huafa Properties



The Exchange TRX, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Developer: Lendlease

Asia

Launched on 23 December last year, The Splendors Zhangjiagang Shopping Center is the prime commercial component of Zhangjiagang Smart City Development by developers China Jinmao Group. The site is located within the nucleus of a new High Technology Development District, north of the city and is situated at the confluence of Zhenxing Middle Road and Huachang Road, surrounded by natural river courses and green belts. Peripheral retail developments within a five-kilometer radius are currently inadequate for the expected high-profile population growth within China Jinmao Group's new Smart City. The Splendors Zhangjiagang design precepts were based on 3MIX Architecture's consistent beliefs that every project should endeavour to respond to its contexts, landscapes and customers' lifestyles in a seamless and meaningful fashion. Located on the south bank of the Yangtze River in the port city of Zhangjiagang, a city renowned for its history and culture along its expansive waterfront, the project's concepts respond to its aquatic settings through metaphoric interpretations literally woven into design features, defining a fluid interior ambiance and

cultural sensibility.

MixC Nanjing is a future retail-led, mixed-use development located in the city's central 700-year-old district known as Sanshan Street. As one of the four great ancient capitals of China, Nanjing's collection and development of a rich and diverse variety of architecture containing buildings from multiple dynasties is a part of its identity. For that reason, the brief for this unique site called for a design which would respect the centuries old historical context of the location while at the same time imagine a vibrant future for the area. The careful balance between 'traditional' and 'new era', therefore, underpins the approach by Lead8. Completed last year by developer China Resources Land and spread over almost 84,000sq m, the retail planning for MixC differs from traditional centres and has made a positive addition to the city. The design philosophy has re-imagined the long-term sustainable protection and continuation of the traditional street texture and urban grain of the area. With this unique positioning, location and concept, MixC Nanjing offers a new city destination that balances modern commercial life with local history.

Malaysian mall operator, Kuala Lumpur Pavilion, has set the opening time frame for the city's latest luxury shopping development, Pavilion Damansara Heights Mall, as May this year. Located in the neighbourhood of Damansara Heights, the development spans more than one million square feet and six storeys. The company said more than 70 per cent of the shopping complex's retail space has been secured by tenants, ranging from F&B players and luxury brands to lifestyle. Around 130 tenants have already confirmed opening stores in Pavilion Damansara Heights Mall, including Swarovski, Aesop, Harvey Norman, Diptyque and Food Republic. Furthermore, the number of tenants is expected to increase until the mall's soft opening with around a total of 380 retail outlets. Pavilion Damansara Heights Mall will be a premium lifestyle destination that sets the standard for curated dining, contemporary retail and customised leisure indulgences in the region when its doors open.

Zhuhai Shizimen Huafa Mall, Phase 2 in Zhuhai, China will have its grand opening on 30 June 2023, with a total GFA of approximately 40,000sq m. The three-storey-high retail project will be positioned as an 'innovative lifestyle mall', which is one of the components of the mixed-use development which also includes a 150m-high hotel and office building and 150m-high residential building. Under construction by developer Zhuhai Huafa Properties, the scheme includes two anchor tenants that are the IMAX theatre and boutique supermarket (Aeon Mall) which will both be stationed in the mall. Aside from the anchor tenants, other brands will include family-orientated names as well as those from the sectors of sports and high-fashion. The aspirations of the project is to create a new vision of retail, culture, entertainment and experience in Zhuhai and finally create Zhuhai Retail Archipelago, an exciting new retail destination and the centre of the community.

The Exchange TRX is a vibrant, experience-led lifestyle destination that is seamlessly integrated within a 10-acre activated public park. Set to be the new lifestyle epicentre of Malaysia's capital city of Kuala Lumpur, The Exchange TRX will offer socially immersive experiences encompassing events, entertainment, arts and culture, sports and leisure and over 430 lifestyle, dining, concept stores and new-to-market brands. Designed as 'a lifestyle precinct in the park', The Exchange TRX is purposefully and harmoniously connected to the 10-acre rooftop TRX City Park containing open spaces with cascading greenery, a children's play area, water features and beautifully shaded areas, making it one of the best places for alfresco dining. Complementing this central attraction will be

event-ready destinations, as well as a dedicated area for aspiring local arts and culture. The Exchange TRX will truly be Kuala Lumpur's most scenic location to celebrate arts, culture, events and most importantly, the community. The whole development will complete in stages between 2023 and 2027, however the retail element of the scheme is scheduled to open in Q4 this year by developer Lendlease.

Hines, the global real estate investment, development and property manager, has announced plans to develop and operate the 'Global Quantum Complex' in Busan, South Korea. The mixed-use development will house the nation's first quantum computing R&D hub, next-generation offices and space for education, retail and residential offerings. Totalling over 180,000sq m, the development is situated in the heart of Haeundae District, the urban live-work-play epicentre of Busan. Designed by renowned international architect Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM), the 74-storey mixed-use tower will be one of Korea's five tallest towers and include market-leading sustainability features to comply with South Korea's 2030 carbon reduction goals. The mixed-use vertical city will feature a state-of-the-art research facility, the highest quality office space in the market and premium lifestyle amenities catering to global and domestic corporations and residents. The project is expected to generate \$3.6bn in economic value and create 18,000 jobs, contributing to Busan's objective to attract and support business and technology growth throughout the region. The Global Quantum Complex will be Hines' largest project in Korea to date and the construction for the scheme will commence in 2024 with a target completion in 2027.



Pavilion Damansara Heights Mall, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Developer: Kuala Lumpur Pavilion



MixC Nanjing, Nanjing, China
Developer: China Resources Land



The Splendors Zhangjiagang, Zhangjiagang, China
Developer: Zhangjiagang Jinmao



The Crossings, Dublin, Republic of Ireland
Developer: Quintain

International

ZIN is a redevelopment project of the former 1970s WTC towers located in the heart of the North Area, the high-rise district of Brussels in Belgium. After dismantling - while keeping the existing structural concrete cores - the 30-storey rebuilt towers will be connected by a new volume of 14 levels benefiting each of a double height for office use. Being developed by Befimmo, ZIN will bring together different uses in an innovative way: each tower will combine either residential/office or hotel/office thanks to intertwined levels. ZIN is a multifunctional project of about 110,000sq m above ground, 75,000sq m of which is office space, 14,000sq m of housing, 16,000sq m of hotel accommodation, leisure areas, hospitality and shops. Public spaces will be provided in the conservatory greenhouse and on the 100m high 110m long shared landscaped rooftop promenade when it launches its first phase in 2024.

Set to open in Q2 this year by developer Melco Resorts & Entertainment, City of Dreams Mediterranean, Europe's first integrated resort (IR), is expected to be the largest premier integrated destination resort in the region. It will feature a fourteen-storey luxury hotel with 500 guest rooms and suites, over 8,000sq m of MICE space, an outdoor amphitheatre, a family adventure park and a variety of premium dining outlets and luxury retail. Its interior design will be based on Melco's international luxury standards, specifically customised for the Cyprus IR, while the exterior design will feature distinct Mediterranean influences. A world-class development, a landmark for Cyprus but also for the wider region, the integrated resort is set to enrich Cyprus' tourism product, attracting thousands of new tourists annually and significantly contribute to countering seasonality, while establishing the island as a year-round all-season destination.

In 2016, Chapman Taylor won a design competition for the complete refurbishment of the Creteil Soleil Shopping Centre in Paris, France. The centre had not been refurbished since the 1970's when it was built. It was extended in early 2000 but not renovated (aesthetically or in terms of MEP). Launched last year by developer Klepierre, the revitalised centre now boasts 247 shops over two floors, one floor of F&B containing 57 restaurants and 18 cinema rooms. Several spaces were completely reconfigured to provide a better atmosphere for shopping. Elegance and simplicity are reflected throughout, in the choice of flooring, balustrades and seating areas, for example. The refurbishment will enable Creteil Soleil to become a part of "Le Grand Paris" which aims to create easily accessible amenities (a '15-minute city') and public spaces.

Technically a redevelopment but in effect a new scheme and with its first phase launched back in September, Owned by Brookfield Properties, The Playce, formerly Potsdamer Platz, will comprise 90 stores (due to open in 2023) in six blocks of themed areas, including food, technology, sport, fashion, lifestyle and entertainment. A complete redevelopment of the interior space and public realm (due to open in 2025) will be complemented by double and triple-height facades for new emblem stores Manifesto Market, a sustainable food hall, an eco-flagship for Peek & Cloppenburg and Mattel: Mission Play. Manifesto Market will span 4,400sq m, with over 750 seats on two floors, combining local gastro- entrepreneurs and artisans, as well as Michelin-starred chefs. P&C opened its eco megastore in Berlin earlier this year.

From hypermarket-led to regional shopping and leisure attraction - Bologna is famed for its Roman and medieval city centre and industrial automotive heritage. Shopville Gran Reno is a project in Bologna, Italy, designed by Design International and oversaw the transformation a



ZIN, Brussels, Belgium
Developer: Befimmo

single mall anchored by a Carrefour hypermarket and associated shop units into an entirely new two-level "loop" shopping mall, with a large food plaza on a third level, integrated with skyline landscaping, an open theatre and over 4,000 car spaces. It has attracted major international occupiers not previously seen in Bologna. Launched in September last year by developers Klepierre, the mall now accommodates 74 new retail units and a food court. The new mall itself is hidden between the car park and the old mall. But a new rooftop open-air piazza opens the centre up to the sky. The scheme involved providing more car parking and totally remodelling the exterior.

Nhood Services Italy became a service provider for the urban transformation project of Waterfront di Levante, which is located in Genoa and set to open in Q4 2023 or Q1 2024. Due to the special architectural solutions made by Renzo Piano, Waterfront can be described as a low environmental impact project for the city. Nhood will be in charge of leasing in partnership with Realia, also responsible for future mall management. The main characteristics of the upcoming project under construction with a circular shape are: GLA of 28,000sq m and GBA of 55,000sq m. The project is in line with the company's mission to create or regenerate living places at the service of citizens according to the city model of "15 minutes urban accessibility" to maximum of services. The entire study of the commercialisation project is functional to the transformation of this place as a space for living, meeting and socialising. On three levels, this mixed-use asset has been designed to host shops, restaurants, services, leisure and entertainment, with sports at the core. The interior layout was designed by the international architecture studio CallisonRKTl, partner of Nhood Services Italy in Merlata Bloom Milano in the heart of Milan's new urban smart district.

The renewed Shopping Mall Zuidplein has been opened by the mayor of Rotterdam Aboutaleb. Dutch-based architectural firm Tconcept designed a renewed fresh interior with some impressive shopfronts for the outdated '70s shopping mall of 60,000sq m GLA, the mall also got an extension of 7,000sq m GLA with convenience stores. Zuidplein is the main shopping centre of the southern part of Rotterdam with over 160 shops and is one of the biggest shopping malls in The Netherlands. The mall is the centre of the Heart of the South mixed-use densification area that includes residences, a cinema, a theatre, hotel and a convention centre. The upgrade of Shopping Mall Zuidplein by the Owners Association of the shopping centre of Zuidplein focussed primarily on improving the quality, circulation and the experience of the mall.

Champions Park by developer Champions Developments will be a sustainable, self-sufficient "5-10-15 min" mixed-use development located in the suburban area of Warsaw in Poland next door to the state of the art football training centre of the top tier multi sports club Legia Warsaw. The goal of the development is to create a place where everyone can become the "champion of their life". Champions Park project is a development of a new "garden city / community". The Market Square or otherwise called the Downtown is the retail and entertainment centre of the development. It includes the commercial/ lettable areas as well as external public and semi covered spaces. This is intended to be the centre of the development where the placemaking activities such as events, entertainment, retail, F&B, services and others will be located. Phase one is set to open in 2026 and the overall development will also feature a SPA and sports hotel with 120 keys, cover a site area of 230,000sq m and a commercial area of 200,000sq m.



Champions Park, Warsaw, Poland
Developer: Champions Developments



City of Dreams Mediterranean, Limassol, Cyprus
Developer: Melco Resorts & Entertainment



Shopville Gran Reno, Bologna, Italy
Developer: Klepierre

The Crossings in Dublin, Republic of Ireland will be a destination and a new vibrant shopping and retail environment to serve the affluent and growing catchment and put The Crossings, Adamstown on the map in terms of modern retailing. The first phase of The Crossings is to be delivered on a phased basis during Q1/Q2 2023 which will see 11,700sq m of retail space alongside 279 residential units. When fully complete, The Crossings will comprise of 975 residential units, 18,000sq m of retail space and 3,500sq m of commercial uses to include a civic/library building, creche, enterprise centre and primary care facility. Under development by Quintain who are best known for the transformation of Wembley Park in London and the third largest developer in Ireland, The Crossings is being designed to be a truly mixed-use community with a 2-acre village green as the focal point for the area as a place to unwind and dine and to bring people together at events, artisan markets and family fun days.

VIA Outlets – the leading owner-operator in redefining the outlet shopping experience with a portfolio of eleven premium outlet centres in nine European countries – announces a 17.5 million euros expansion programme for its Sevilla Fashion Outlet, the first Premium outlet shopping destination in Seville, creating 150 new jobs for the local community whilst contributing to the economic growth of the region. Due for completion in the last quarter of 2023, the shopping destination is poised to become Andalusia's new landmark premium shopping offer. The outlet shopping destination will grow both in size and services with an increase of close to 20 per cent in gross leasable area, reaching 18,396.6sq m and the creation of 17 new spaces to host a total of 80 stores in the entire centre. The extension will allow the entry of large national and international fashion brands and a completely new hospitality offer. To accommodate the expected increase in clientele, the parking had some recent renovations to increase capacity by 80 per cent.

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 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. 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.

Cardiff Bay in Wales is set to become a key retail destination, with the leisure-led Atlantic Wharf development by Cardiff Council bringing new commercial and retail spaces to the area. The first phase of this £1bn GDV project has secured planning permission and will be developed by Robertson Group. It includes a 17,000-capacity arena, providing the catalyst for accompanying commercial and mixed-use developments to be located along a new plaza. These retail spaces will offer people places to come together to be entertained, shop and relax. The site will be connected by a new metro stop and pedestrian and cycle links from Cardiff's city centre to the plaza's main entrance, increasing footfall in an already popular visitor area. Cardiff recently became the sixth biggest retail centre in the UK, attracting over 20 million visitors a year and bringing £1bn to the local economy, a trend which is set to continue and grow. The opening of the first phase, which includes the arena, is set for 2025.



Al Khiran Hybrid Outlet Mall, Sabah Al Ahmad Sea City, Kuwait
Developer: Tamdeen



Festival Avenue, Cairo Festival City Mall, New Cairo, Egypt
Developer: Al-Futtaim Group

Middle East

Majid Al Futtaim, the leading shopping mall, communities, retail and leisure pioneer across the Middle East, Africa and Central Asia, celebrated the inauguration of Mall of Oman last month, following a soft launch of the mall in September 2021. The opening event was attended by His Excellency Qais bin Mohammed bin Moosa Al Youssef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion; Tariq Al Futtaim, Member of the Majid Al Futtaim Holding and Capital Boards; Ahmed Galal Ismail, Chief Executive Officer, Majid Al Futtaim Holding; senior Government officials and members of the Majid Al Futtaim Executive Leadership team. Featuring distinct architecture and offering exceptional retail and hospitality options, Mall of Oman is home to Snow Oman – the largest snow park in the region, Oman's largest VOX Cinemas – complete with 15 screens, 260 international and local retail outlets and over 45 dining options, with plans to introduce 15 more dining experiences in 2023.

Al Khiran, the region's first hybrid outlet mall is set to open in 2023 and it will serve to meet heightened shopper expectation by offering a combination of high value and dynamic experiences through a mix of premium outlet shopping, unique dining options, cutting-edge entertainment and recreational leisure experiences like Kuwait's largest marina with 900 berths, a 70,000sq m boardwalk, 1.25km walking track and outdoor gardens with an amphitheatre for year-long events. Additional features that are currently being planned before opening will include multipurpose sports facilities and a resort hotel. Under development by Tamdeen, the upcoming outlet mall will soon be the main commercial centre in the South of Kuwait serving as the Central Business District of the area.

Festival Avenue, the new expansion of Cairo Festival city mall being developed by Al-Futtaim Real Estate Group is set to open in 2023 will redefine the Egyptian retail market with an unparalleled shopping and lifestyle experience. Spanning over 45,000sq m, Festival Avenue will soon take Cairo Festival City Mall's unique experience to the next level of luxury and fashion. Set to be Cairo's ultimate fashion forward destination welcoming international renowned brands, this top-of-the-line extension will open its doors to a variety of 80 first-to-market luxury fashion & jewellery brands that will call Festival Avenue their first address in Egypt. Festival Avenue will also offer an entertainment destination for all ages and an assortment of international restaurants with indoor and alfresco dining experience.

Following the successful completion of a design competition, the Dubai Studio of LWK + PARTNERS has been appointed as the lead architect of DIFC Living and Innovation Two, DIFC's first mixed-use development in Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC), one of Dubai's most sought-after lifestyle destinations. Under development by DIFC Authority, the development is a response to the ever-evolving nature of workspaces and lifestyle choices and features more than 170 upscale residences embracing the future of living in Dubai's financial hub. The project broke ground in November 2022 and is expected to be completed by 2025. With a strong emphasis on sustainable design, the new development offers 170 contemporary apartments with best-in-class residential amenities, including a stunning infinity pool, a fully equipped gym, a play area for kids, a café, residents' lounges and a variety of upscale retail stores and a signature restaurant. The flagship project comprises 144,155sq ft of offices and co-working spaces and an additional 38,303sq ft has been earmarked for retail use.



DIFC Living And Innovation Two, Dubai, UAE
Developer: DIFC Authority



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