

Out-of-the-Box Thinking

Highlights Shared Ownership Conference



Creativity, as most successful businesspeople know all too well, is not solely the domain of painters, writers, composers, and others occupied in the arts. Tapping into the right-brain hemisphere is as valuable for out-of-the-box market strategy as it was for the original Renaissance man, Leonardo da Vinci. This sentiment was brought home by Michael Gelb, who spoke to a rapt audience at the Shared Ownership Investment Conference, held September 18 to 20, 2012. The best-selling author and leader in the human potential movement suggested a number of da Vinci behaviors that could be applied to modern business situations for achieving greater success.

Fresh Approaches to Challenge

But discussion of the merit of creativity in business wasn't limited to Gelb's presentation. At the Shared Ownership Investment Conference, now in its 14th year, the agenda of panels, presentations, and breakout sessions addressed a spectrum of challenges facing the industry — and creative means of meeting them.

Some 500 delegates representing 27 countries converged on the Peabody Orlando in Florida to share best practices, make contacts, and explore fresh approaches to industry issues, old and new. The conference attracted new entrants, potential developers, lenders, and shared ownership veterans.

"This event, spearheaded by conference founder and patron sponsor Interval International, provides new entrants and existing players the venue to explore opportunities and network with other experts and service providers in every facet of the industry," says Bryan Ten Broek, senior vice president of resort sales and business development, North America, for Interval International. "We're proud that developers and lenders, and many other attendees, have recognized the potential of shared ownership and chosen to enter the industry."

A Notable Lineup

The event featured a lineup of notable speakers in addition to Gelb, including Peter C. Yesawich, Ph.D., vice chairman of MMGY Global, who presented findings from his agency's *2012 Portrait of American Travelers* (see related story on page 22). Another keynote speaker was Stephen J. Cloobek, chairman and CEO of Diamond Resorts



LEFT TO RIGHT: Craig M. Nash, Howard Nusbaum, Stephen P. Weisz, Michael C. Szwajkowski, Bruce L. Thompson, and Owen Perry.

International®, who related the achievement of Brand USA, the enterprise established by the Travel Promotions Act of 2010 to encourage U.S. tourism.

The Meet the Leaders panel discussion, a favorite among attendees, covered current issues and trends within the shared ownership and hospitality industries. Panelists included Craig M. Nash, chairman, president, and CEO, Interval Leisure Group; Stephen P. Weisz, president and CEO, Marriott Vacations Worldwide Corporation; Michael C. Szwajkowski, executive vice president, commercial and specialty finance, Capital One, N.A.; Bruce L. Thompson, CEO, Gold Key/PHR Hotels & Resorts; and Owen Perry, managing partner, Villa Group Resorts. The moderator was Howard Nusbaum, president and CEO, American Resort Development Association.

Top Sales Pays off for Ten

The announcement of the award recipients of the 2012 Winners Circle sales incentive program for North America and the Caribbean was another conference highlight. Among the top sales executives from Interval-affiliated resorts with the highest sales results, 10 were represented on stage to participate in the final drawing. Nine of the 10 took home US\$500, and Juan Carlos Ibacache from Hippocampus Viña del Mar Resort & Club in Viña del Mar, Chile, walked away with the US\$5,000 grand prize.

Available to delegates were complimentary research studies and reports from the American Resort Development Association and Ragatz Associates. They included: the *State of the Vacation Timeshare Industry: United States Study, 2012 Edition*; *Financial*



Keynote speaker Michael Gelb



From captivating keynote speeches to well-attended panels and workshops to exciting awards presentations, the Shared Ownership Investment Conference attracted new entrants to the business as well as conference veterans to share best practices and explore fresh approaches to industry challenges.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Marcos Agostini; Orlando Arroyo, CEO of Sunset World; Erika Garcia, Sunset World.



Bruce Thompson, CEO of Gold Key/PHR Hotels & Resorts; and Bryan Ten Broek.

Performance Study, 2012 Edition; Shared Vacation Ownership Owners Report, 2012 Edition; Economic Impact of the Timeshare Industry on the US Economy, 2012 Edition; The Shared Ownership Resort Real Estate Industry in North America, 2012; and Interval's Shared Resort Real Estate Ownership 2012: A Market Perspective.

Students from the Rosen College of Hospitality Management at the University of Central Florida participated as volunteers and learned about career options by attending workshops and panel discussions.

Interval has previously hosted investment conferences in Barbados, China, Hungary, India, Italy, South Africa, and the United Arab Emirates. The 15th Annual Shared Ownership Investment Conference will be held October 28 to 30, 2013, at the Eden Roc Renaissance Miami Beach in Florida. []

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