

Future Forward



INTERVIEW | HWA HANNA

Radisson Hotel group is establishing a reputation as a pioneer in digital innovation. We chat to **Tim Cordon**, COO for the Middle East, Africa and South East Asia Pacific, to learn more

Radisson is doing exciting things in terms of technology and innovation. Can you tell us about some recent developments? We aim to elevate guest experiences through innovation. Our personalised content across 60 markets has led to a significant boost in engagement, and our immersive virtual experiences allow guests to explore over 185 hotels from anywhere. By leveraging AI-driven recommendations, we've refined the booking process to be more intuitive and customer-centric. Moreover, our Radisson Meetings Dream Machine has empowered event planners to bring creative visions to life using cutting-edge generative AI technology. It's not just about technology; it's about creating memorable, human-centered experiences.

Why is it so important to stay ahead of the curve? Technology is the backbone of modern hospitality. Staying ahead allows us to anticipate evolving guest needs, create seamless experiences, and enhance operational efficiency. But more importantly, it positions us to deliver unforgettable moments for our guests while future-proofing our business in a highly competitive market. Innovation drives differentiation and enables us to continuously exceed guest expectations, which is key to long-term loyalty.

How is Radisson Hotel Group ensuring that customers have the best digital experience?

At Radisson, the digital journey is designed with the guest in mind from start to finish. Our app, available in 30 languages, makes booking quick and convenient. Through our AI-powered tools, we provide tailored recommendations based on preferences, ensuring a seamless experience. Additionally, our virtual tours offer guests a true sense of place before they arrive. By combining personalisation, immersion, and convenience, we've redefined what it means to engage with hospitality digitally, consistently exceeding guest expectations and driving higher conversion rates.



LEFT: Radisson Resort Ras Al Khaimah

LOWER LEFT: Radisson Collection Residence, Riyadh



What about in terms of operations?

Behind the scenes, technology enhances efficiency and empowers our teams to deliver better guest experiences. The Radisson Operations App streamlines communication and workflow, allowing staff to address issues in real time. AI-powered predictive maintenance ensures everything runs smoothly, reducing downtime and preventing disruptions, while automated inventory management optimises our resources, from housekeeping to food and beverage operations, making our hotels more sustainable and cost-efficient.

What are the most important trends in hotel-related tech? AI-driven personalisation allows us to tailor guest experiences based on individual preferences, enhancing loyalty and satisfaction. Mobile check-ins and digital keys have become essential for convenience and safety. Sustainability solutions like energy-efficient systems and green housekeeping are meeting growing demand for eco-friendly options. Advanced data helps us understand guest behaviour, enabling us to refine operations and marketing strategies. And immersive experiences, like augmented and virtual reality, are changing how guests interact with hotels, from pre-arrival tours to in-room services.

Which will become essential down the line? In the next 5-10 years, AI and machine learning will transform guest interactions, offering hyper-personalised service in real-time. Sustainability will move from being a competitive edge to an industry standard, with energy-efficient technologies reducing both costs and environmental impact. Virtual and augmented reality will further redefine guest engagement, allowing immersive previews of destinations and spaces. We will continue to invest in these areas to stay at the forefront of hospitality innovation.

Which markets are the most future-forward?

The Middle East and Asia Pacific lead the way. In the Middle East, tech-savvy travellers are driving demand for digital-first services like contactless check-ins and immersive experiences. Meanwhile, Asia Pacific is pioneering sustainability initiatives, with developers and governments pushing for green technologies. Both regions are embracing cutting-edge solutions.

Talk to us about recent growth. 2024 has been a year of remarkable growth for us. We've added over 30,000 keys across EMEA and APAC, with Radisson Blu cementing its position as the leading upper-upscale brand in Europe. One highlight has been our focus on hybrid meeting solutions, which cater to the growing demand for tech-enabled, flexible workspaces.

We're also pushing forward with AI-powered immersive technologies that allow guests to explore hotels digitally, helping them make more informed choices. For our Meetings & Events segment, we'll continue developing virtual tools that simplify event planning for organisers and guests alike. This blend of digital innovation and strategic market growth positions us for continued success. ■

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