

BUSINESS

Physical upgrade proposed for Bangkok hotels

SUCHAT SRIITAMA
THE NATION

EXCLUSIVE

Bangkok hotels need to be refurbished to strengthen their competitiveness, as many rooms are coming on the market in the next few years, a consultant said yesterday.

"Knowing when to approach an owner or operator at just the right moment with a new idea will help push them ahead of the competition. This relates to more than just interior design or architectural upgrades to an operating property," said Alan Barr, creative director of Blink Design Group.

As a specialist firm in the hospitality industry, it is offering a fully integrated, end-to-end range of services, including brand identity, master planning, architecture, interior design and computer visualisation.

It sees that hotels evolve through their life cycle in natural phases to the renovation and upgrade stage.

A physical upgrade is a major part of the process, but it also includes brand integrity and brand identity, where a refresh can put a property out in front of the competition.

"Another trend would be to create hotels and resorts that have a tailored identity. In a world overloaded with choices, standing out in the crowd becomes more and more important," he said.

Blink Design Group has been acquired by a design firm, Space Matrix, as it sets its sights on becoming a leading global player in the hospitality design industry.

The acquisition value was not disclosed, but the fee will enable Blink to grow and leverage the resources of Space Matrix, Barr said.

Space Matrix chief executive officer Anurag Srivastava said it would continue expanding in the hospitality arena with its cutting-edge architecture and interior design in the Asia-Pacific region through its 11 offices and 450 staff, while Blink would retain its brand and identity.

Barr said that currently on board were projects in Thailand, Bali, mainland China, Vietnam, India, Singapore and Macau. Over the next few years it expects this volume to increase slightly.

Blink inspired international hotels and resorts with its bespoke aesthetics such as Conrad, Hilton, Jumeirah, Langham Place, Le Meridien, Regent, Sheraton, Westin and The Luxury Collection.

Here, it is working on the interior design for Regent Phuket, which opens early next year. It is also working on developing a new brand for an integrated resort concept that will be promoted in various locations throughout southern Thailand.



ALAN BARR, creative director of Blink Design Group.

32 PAGES, 2

THURSDAY, October 13, 2011

om/NationNews

THE NATION