

Pierre Boissel, general manager of Crowne Plaza Hotel Bucharest: *“Last year there was a drop on the food & beverage segment. Clients took more time to decide for the Christmas & New Year’s Eve events. Several major companies have cancelled these events held every year for their employees.”* □□□□□□□□

BH: Occupancy rates in Bucharest hotels have shrunk by almost 15 per cent last year, with the Romanian capital registering the biggest drop in the European cities after Reykjavik, according to a report by Deloitte. How was Crowne Plaza's occupancy rate last year, against 2007?

Pierre Boissel: Our occupancy rate registered a slight drop in the last quarter of 2008. However, 2008 cannot be compared to 2007, which was an extraordinary year with a great development.

BH: Many companies and businesspeople decided to shed the numbers of trips abroad. What percentage of your customers were foreigners last year and what percentage Romanians?

Pierre Boissel: Our clients are percentage wise more foreigners then Romanians, however we have not witnessed a strong drop in 2008 in any of the segments.

BH: What other consequences has the economic crisis had last year and will keep having this year on the hospitality market?

Pierre Boissel: Last year there has been a drop on the food & beverage segment. Clients took more time to decide for the Christmas & New Year’s Eve events. Several major companies have cancelled these events held every year for their employees. This year people will be more selective in regards to the length of their journeys. They will reduce the number of days they spend in a hotel. However, clients will now focus on greater value for their money.

BH: What strategies has Crowne Plaza adopted to offset the effects of the crisis?

Pierre Boissel: We have chosen to maintain the best of service and quality for a competitive rate on the market. We also reduced our cost wherever necessary without affecting the quality of our services.

BH: What amount have you invested in 2008 in the enhancement of the quality services and the development of the hotel and what investments are you planning to make in 2009?

Pierre Boissel: We have always invested in training our team and will continue to invest in our employees to keep providing the best workplace and to ensure best service. Also, we have completed several projects of upgrading the hotels’ facilities. We have upgraded several rooms, our meeting & event rooms and we added a brand new boardroom to our hotel.

BH: Have you modified the rack rates in order to adjust to the new financial constraints?

People willing to cut hotel accommodation length, not services quality

Written by Administrator

Thursday, 12 February 2009 02:04 - Last Updated Wednesday, 18 February 2009 10:17

Pierre Boissel: The rack rates for 2009 are the same as in 2008, and we have not considered to increase them.

BH: Did you have to dismiss people to cut costs?

Pierre Boissel: We consider our team members the asset to success and therefore we did not and will not consider dismissing them for cutting costs. However, we have not considered hiring new staff.

Oamenii sunt dispusi sa isi reduca sejururile la hotel, dar nu renunta la calitatea serviciilor

Pierre Boissel, manager general Hotel Crowne Plaza Bucuresti: *“Anul trecut am inregistrat o scadere pe segmentul de food & beverage. Clientii s-au gandit mai bine inainte sa decida cum vor petrece Craciunul si Revelionul. Cateva companii importante au anulat petrecherile organizate pentru angajati in fiecare an.”*

BH: Ratele de ocupare in hotelurile din Bucuresti s-au diminuat cu aproape 15 la suta anul trecut, iar capitala Romaniei a inregistrat cea mai mare scadere dintre toate orasele europene, dupa Reykjavik, potrivit unui raport al companiei Deloitte. Cum a fost rata de ocupare al hotelului Crowne Plaza Bucuresti anul trecut, comparativ cu 2007?

Pierre Boissel: Rata noastra de ocupare a inregistrat o usoara scadere in ultimul trimestru al lui 2008. Totusi 2008 nu poate fi comparat cu 2007, care a fost un an extraordinar cu o dinamica foarte mare.

BH: Multe companii si multi oameni de afaceri au decis sa reduca numarul de calatorii in strainatate . Cat la suta din clientii dumneavoastra au fost straini anul trecut si cat la suta au fost romani?

Pierre Boissel: Procentajele de clienti straini si romani sunt similare, cu toate acestea nu am observat o scadere puternica in 2008 nici in ceea ce priveste clientii straini, nici din punct de vedere al clientilor romani.

BH: Ce alte consecinte a avut criza economica asupra pietei hoteliere anul trecut si ce efecte va continua sa aiba anul acesta?

Pierre Boissel: Anul trecut a fost o scadere pe segmentul de food & beverage. Clientii s-au gandit mai mult inainte de a decide cum vor petrece Craciunul si Anul Nou. Cateva companii importante au anulat evenimentele organizate pentru angajati in fiecare an. Anul acesta oamenii vor fi mai selectivi in ceea ce priveste durata sejurului intr-un hotel. Vor reduce numarul de zile petrecute intr-un hotel. Cu toate aceste clientii vor pune accent mai mult pe calitatea care li se ofera in schimbul banilor pe care ii platesc.

BH: Ce strategii a adoptat Crowne Plaza Bucuresti pentru a contrabalansa efectele crizei?

Pierre Boissel: Am ales sa mentinem cea mai buna calitate a serviciilor pentru o cota de piata competitiva. Am redus si costurile acolo unde a fost necesar, fara a afecta insa calitatea serviciilor.

BH: Ce suma ati investit in 2008 in imbunatatirea calitatii serviciilor si in dezvoltarea hotelului si ce investitii veti face in 2009?

Pierre Boissel: Am investit intotdeauna in pregatirea echipei noastre si vom continua sa investim in angajatii nostri pentru a oferim cele mai bune locuri de munca si a asigura cele mai bune servicii. Am avut si cateva proiecte de imbunatatire a facilitatilor hotelului. Am imbunatatit cateva camere, salile de conferinte si am adaugat o sala noua de sedinte.

BH: Ati modificat tarifele de cazare pentru a face fata noilor constrangeri financiare ?

Pierre Boissel: Tarifele de cazare in 2009 sunt aceleasi ca in 2008 si nu am luat in considerare posibilitatea de a le mari.

BH: A fost nevoie sa concediati angajati pentru a reduce cheltuielile?

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Pierre Boissel: Consideram ca membrii echipei noastre reprezinta un factor foarte important pentru succes si nu vom face concedieri pentru a reduce costurile. Nu ne gandim nici sa angajam personal nou.