



Innovation

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Mercure injects new life into its network

Mercure has hotels in 49 countries, is the world's third-largest hotel chain ** in its segment, the largest in Europe (where it has more than 500 hotels), and the leader in key markets such as France, Brazil and Australia. This brand is in a unique position and kicking off projects across the board to inject new life into its network and stay in the lead! Here are the four key principles underlying that drive.

Mercure, "The Best Hotel in Town"

Reacting to an increasingly globalized world, customers seek greater diversity in the hotel offering, but remain very demanding when it comes to quality of service. Mercure responds to this need by offering hotels with individual personalities that are rooted in their cities and regions. "Mercure hotels are run by passionate hoteliers and offer the quality guarantee of an international brand," explains Global Brand Marketing Senior VP Frédéric Fontaine, adding "With choice locations in major and secondary cities, we always focus on quality and aim to be 'the best hotel in town!'" That unique position is what the brand is intent on harnessing across its network.



Expanding at a sustained pace

2011 was a record growth year for the brand, which opened 77 hotels worldwide, including 63 under franchise. This dynamism makes Mercure a key player in the midscale segment, which is the world hotel industry's core market and one that appeals strongly to both investors and franchisees.

Mercure continues to expand in large cities and on average opens establishments in two new countries a year. In 2012, the brand opened its first hotels in Russia and South Korea, respectively the Mercure Arbat Moscow and Mercure Seoul Ambassador Gangnam Sodowe. In 2013, the brand will continue to expand in Eastern Europe and will also develop its network in Latin America.

Christophe Alaux, Chief Operating Officer Hotels France describes Mercure as "a truly 'glocal' brand", referring to the fact that it is an international network in which the style, design and services of each hotel are inspired by local cultures, "Mercure is primarily driven by a network of franchisees and managers, which makes it an ideal brand for the deployment of Accor's strategy", he explains.

Indeed, close to 75% of the network is operated under franchise or management contracts and Mercure federates the hoteliers around strong brand identity hallmarks (for example, the Dédicaces room concept, the dedicated inspiration and style book, a quality contract that guarantees the uniqueness of the customer promise throughout the network, etc.) and the acknowledged expertise of the Accor group (E-commerce, procurement, technical expertise, training, etc.).

Refurbishing extensively

In 2010, the brand stepped up its global refurbishment program. Today, close to 50% of the brand's rooms have been renovated or are in line with the brand's new vision.

In 2012, Mercure confirms this renovation pace which ensures that 10% to 15% (10,000 bedrooms) of its establishments are refurbished each year. "The renovations are based on a reinterpretation of the codes of the city in which the hotel is located. The idea is to give Mercure an image worthy of its network, to reinforce its coherence while respecting its diversity. The project has been met with great enthusiasm by the franchisees, who will benefit from the image of a strong, attractive and coherent brand," concludes Christophe Alaux.

"Dédicaces" an innovative renovation concept

Mercure has introduced a revolutionary renovation concept in France, developed by the internal teams in collaboration with two French interior design firms. This concept enables the renovation of Mercure hotel rooms and/or bathrooms with a 40% reduction in cost, time and noise. By capitalizing on "lean management" methods and good component management practices in the auto industry, the rooms and

bathrooms are refurbished by module. This concept preserves the identity of each hotel in terms of atmosphere and interior decoration. A trend book provides two different design options for each of the proposed room styles (contemporary, classical and traditional). For each of the three proposed styles, designers have selected specific equipment, furniture, materials and color schemes that enable a wide range of combinations. In addition, with the innovative e-design device “*Configurateur Dédicaces*”, previewing the rooms in 3D will be possible before any decisions are taken.

Mercure will soon deploy this winning renovation concept in Germany, the United Kingdom and Italy, and then more widely across Europe.

[To know more about Mercure](#)

**As at end-December 2011*

***Excluding North America*