



Dear Members,

As this is my first newsletter to you all as the 2012 IHG Owners Association European Board Chairman, I'd like to introduce myself. My name is Gerhard Finster; I own and operate three IHG branded hotels in Germany as well as one other brand. My background is with IHG, I worked 18 years with them as District Director responsible for Germany and Eastern Europe before I started my own company operating hotels in Stuttgart, Munich and Gütersloh in Germany and Salzburg, Austria.

I see my two year term as European Chairman as a great honour and I have clear aims around what I hope to achieve over this period. My key objectives for 2012 are around reducing the cost of sale/cost of doing business with the brands; localisation of brand standards and of course the ongoing oversight and endorsement that the Association has over any new/changing brand standards, as well as a number of objectives around sales & marketing, most importantly the book direct initiative.

I encourage you to attend your Country Committee meetings to hear updates on these priorities and to give your input, especially concerning brand standard changes but also your views around IT and Sales & Marketing, the other sub-committee's that we operate in Europe. All three sub-committees and brand forums include a representative from each of the Country Committees, so it is important that they have your feedback. Click [here](#) to view the dates of forthcoming meetings.

Our first European board meeting of 2012 took place in Warsaw, Poland, where we also met with some of the local owners of this growing market. For any of those who were unable to attend I invite you to contact me via Gerhard.Finster@owners.org to offer your views on the market and any challenges that you face.

We will be hosting a similar meeting for owners in Eastern Europe, who are not currently represented by one of the Country Committees listed below and invite you to come along to the InterContinental Hotel Istanbul on Thursday 28 June 2012 – register [here](#) if you would like to join us.

I look forward to meeting many of you during my two year term as Chairman, if you have any questions or issues you'd like to raise with me directly, please contact me via Gerhard.Finster@owners.org

Best regards,



European Board Meeting Highlights

- The board welcomed new members, Jean Charles Denis representing France, and Stuart Metcalfe from RealStar (LRG - UK).
- Issues raised at Country Committee's around HeartBeat were shared with IHG, and an update will be given at Q2 Country Meetings.
- A request was made for an update on Technology and REvolution – this will be given at the board level and cascaded down to the country meetings as soon as possible.
- IHG gave a high level view of their three year plan in Europe; development is to be a winder topic in Q2.
- An update was given on the Crowne Plaza refresh work – the next phase will see the release of the sound strategy and branded service training. Further feedback was given to IHG around the cost of the training. Green Engage will be free to Crowne Plaza hotels in 2012. A 'Freshen-Up' tool kit will be issued to all Crowne Plaza hotels with full details of the new identity and 3-phase re-fresh strategy – Freshen-Up, Move-Up and Shine.
- A number of brand standard amendments were endorsed – these will be communicated via IHG Mail but were discussed at the Q1 Country Committee meetings. The proposed relaxation ideas which came out of the Q1 Country Committee's were discussed. IHG is looking at each suggestion and feedback will be shared with brand forum representatives.
- A big thank you to our sponsors of the board meeting, Sealy – suppliers of mattresses and bedding. www.sealyeurope.com

If you would like more details on any of the topics above, please contact your Country Committee Chairman, contact details can be found below.

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- [Facebook](#)
- [YouTube](#)
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And via the new website: www.owners.org

Contact the Owners Association

If you have any questions regarding your membership or any of the Committees, remember you can contact **Jo Brake**, Regional Manager EMEA & Australasia. Based at IHG's office in Denham, UK, Jo can be contacted on:

Tel: +44 (0) 1895 512 663 or by e-mail jo.brake@owners.org

Country Committee Chairs:

Africa – Andrew.Rogers@owners.org

BeNeScan (Belgium, Netherlands, Scandinavia) – Patrick.DePeuter@owners.org

France – Jean-Charles.Denis@owners.org

DACH – (Germany, Austria, Switzerland) – Bernd.Niemeier@owners.org

Italy – Alessandro.Geminiani@owners.org

Iberia – Reinhard.Wall@owners.org

UK (Holiday Inn Express) – Keith.Griffiths@owners.org

UK (Full Service - Holiday Inn, Crowne Plaza, Hotel Indigo, Staybridge Suites) – Martin.Griffiths@owners.org

Sales & Marketing Sub-Committee – Keith.Griffiths@iahi.org

IT Sub-Committee – Patrick.DePeuter@owners.org

Brand Standards Sub-Committee – Martin.Quinn@owners.org