

HOTEL

INNOVATIONS & TECHNOLOGIES

Accor Group's Innovations & Design Department

The Fatal Weapon

Exclusive interview with Michel Gicquel,
Artistic Director – Innovations and Design Department,
Accor Group

Optimising Internet Booking

The Crisis Buster



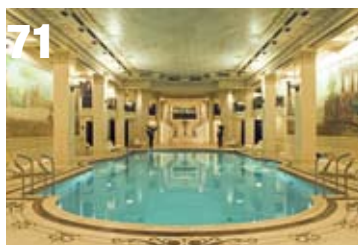
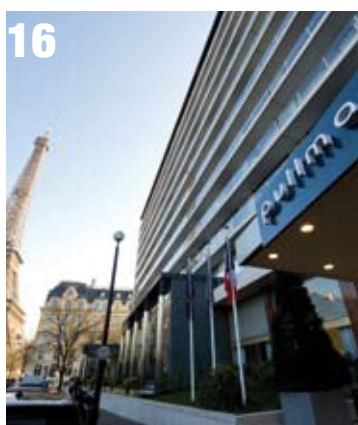
Natacha Froger
■ Interior Architect,
Atome Associés



Max Starkov
■ Chief eBusiness
Strategist, HeBS



Leo Brand
■ CEO,
Swisscom Hospitality
Services



03 THE MARKET

- 03** The Market: Reasons to Believe
by Gérard Lefebvre, Cleverdis

05 SPECIAL DOSSIER

- 05** Spotlight on the Accor Group
- 06** Accor Group's Innovations & Design
Department: The Fatal Weapon
Interview with Michel Gicquel, Accor Group
- 11** Into the Surreal:
The Accor Concept Rooms
- 12** Sources of Inspiration – Interview with
Natacha Froger, Atome Agency
- 14** The Pullman Concept – Interview with
Denys Sappey, Pullman France
- 16** The New Pullman Paris Tour Eiffel
- 17** Glistening Jewel in the Pullman Crown –
Interview with René Angoujard, Pullman
Paris Tour Eiffel Hotel

18 OPTIMISING INTERNET BOOKING

- 19** The Internet IS a Crisis Buster – Interview
with Jean Robberecht, FastBooking
- 22** Speak To Me... In My "Language"
Analyst Report by Max Starkov
- 26** Don't Bother Me... I am CMSing!
Analyst Report by A Couple of Chicks
- 28** Face-what? Twitter Who? – Interview with
Jerome Wise, TravelCLICK, Inc.
- 29** Avoiding the Marketing – Interview with
Edward St. Onge, Ezyield.com
- 31** Accor Hospitality Overhauls its Meetings
Website – Interview with Vincent Roux,
Accor Group
- 32** When Online Marketing Gets Complex –
Interview with Reinout Klammer, Lloyd Hotel
- 33** The Landmark London – Interview with
Sally Beck, The Landmark London
- 34** Technology Swiss Style – Interview with
Peter Pfohl and Heiko Siebert, Mövenpick
Hotels & Resorts
- 36** Protel's bookatonce: How to Take Care of
Your Hotel Needs Online
- 37** Regain Control of Your Business
Interview with Dieter Dirnberger, Serenata
- 38** Do You Know Who Your Guests Are? –
Interview with Gunnar von Hagen, Lindner
Hotels & Resorts

39 IN-ROOM TECHNOLOGY

- 40** Hotel Guest Wants and Needs – White
paper for HTNG by Richard Barnes,
Cleverdis
- 44** Contemporary with a Twist! – Interview
with Hannah Loughlin, Pelham Hotel
- 45** Are You Ready? For the Digital Switchover
– Interview Thierry Guillemin, Promax
France
- 46** Futureproofing... the Easy Way! -
Deuromedia
- 48** D-TV Changeover Simplified – Interview
with Ralph Edeine, Eutelsat
- 50** Our Hotel Room – What Do Travellers
Really Want? - iBAHN
- 52** Getting Up to Speed with HDTV – Mcom
- 53** Aesthetics and Design Gain Importance in
In-Room Controls – Interview with Alberto
Vuan, VDA
- 54** Connectivity: A Priority for Today's Guest –
Interview with Gordon Brown, TeleAdapt

57 CONVERGED NETWORK SOLUTIONS

- 58** Yes... You Can Enter the IP Age! – Interview
with Leo Brand, Swisscom
- 60** Triple-Play at 1 Euro/ Day per Room... It's
Possible! – Aastra, UCOPIA, EONA

61 PUBLIC SPACES: DIGITAL SIGNAGE

- 62** Way to Go... - Cayin
- 63** Creating a New Dynamic and Reducing
Costs Through Digital Signage – Monarch
Skyline Hotel
- 64** A New Way to Look at Business Facilities –
Sofitel Heathrow

65 HOTEL FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

- 67** Making the Most of Your Renovations –
Interview with Hervé Lauberte, Le Meridien
Hotels & Resorts
- 69** Assuring Data Security for Your Guests

71 WELLNESS AND SPA TECHNOLOGIES

- 73** The SPAvolution! – Interview with Thomas
Rössler, TAC GmbH

75 HOSPITALITY EVENTS

- 76** Coming to DUBAI! – Interview with Claudia
Wood, IHTF
- 78** Events Calendar & A Word from the
Associations



© Photo: Accor – Room 217 Sofitel Arc de Triomphe. Designer: Michel Gicquel

Special Dossier

Spotlight on the Accor Group

In the pages of this dossier, we have attempted as much as possible to highlight the different facets that make up the big picture of “Innovations and Technologies”.

We begin with the ethnological reflections of a charismatic and visionary personality in the shape of Michel Gicquel (pages 6 & 7), who, with his global analysis of the evolution of the human habitat, delivers an astute perception of what innovations and technologies should bring to light. Following this we had the immense pleasure of “looking through the eyes” of a designer with a veritable touch of genius, Natacha Froger (page 8), who integrates innovations and technologies in her unique conceptions with great sensual beauty. Following this we have spoken to two men in the field, those who

“live” the application of these ideas and principles, Denys Sappey (page 9) and a true master of hotel management, René Angoujard (page 11) who put a unique, inimitable spin on the fact that Innovations and Technologies must, above all, be at the service of people – both employees and clients.

Of all the brands of the Accor group, Pullman appears, in particular, to have a will towards the development of this optimisation of the work environment for its employees and the quality of customer service made possible through innovations underpinned by new technologies. We spotlight this with a short feature on what will doubtlessly be the new flagship of the brand: the Pullman Paris Tour Eiffel (page 10).

Accor Group's Innovations & Design Department

The Fatal Weapon

Spearheading the Accor Hospitality group's drive towards guest rooms that will match or even exceed tomorrow's clients' wants and needs, Michel Gicquel has been coordinating a profound reflection on the topic. So how is the living space evolving?



Michel Gicquel
Artistic Director
Innovations and Design Department
Accor

A graduate of the ESTP school of engineering in France, Michel Gicquel is also an independent interior architect. He has extensive experience in the renovation of prestigious company head offices, restaurants and exceptional private homes. Michel first began to work with Accor in the 1980s, and established the "Recherche & Style" division in 1994, which later became Innovations & Design Department for Accor. In his current role of Artistic Director – Innovations and Design Department Accor, he contributes actively to the evolution of the Accor brands, to the development of innovative products and services, as well as monitoring the market trends that impact the brands. For Sofitel, Michel has contributed to the overall brand repositioning programme specifically in the area of Innovations and Design.

The evolution of the guest room comes primarily through its layout. Today, there is a fundamental change to the guest room plan.

In other words, we're not at all talking about the detail of the size of the TV or how the plugs are situated; we are talking about how one "lives this space". There is something of which we must be conscious today, it's that the hotel, like the home habitat, is evolving towards a third era: the digital, or virtual age, where the distribution of space is changing.

To summarise this, for the 20 centuries of the rural age, habitats were singular spaces, where one would eat, sleep and share everything around a central fireplace in a communal or tribal manner. The industrial revolution saw a physical mutation. People moved into towns, and the homes, epitomised by the Haussmann or Victorian styles, where rooms were dedicated to functions. Bedrooms were for sleeping, sitting room for sitting, dining room for dining, and so on. That was the industrial age, and we have been seeing the dying phases of this period over the past twenty or thirty years. At the same time, we've been seeing an explosion in world population, a looming energy crisis, not to mention environmental issues.

So on the one hand, we have pressure and on the other a fundamental evolution, and at the same time, the emergence of new products that we all use; products that are smaller and smaller; products that are less and less expensive, more and more reliable and increasingly nomadic. Consequently, the evolution of society leads the evolution of our habitat, and the habitat becomes one of adaptability and flexibility. For example, the kitchen is becoming a place in which people "live", while the traditional dining room is tending to disappear. It's becoming a multi-functional room with doors that stay open or closed, and the relationship between the bedroom and bathroom is changing, as people leave the door open between the two.

If you are alone, why have just a few square metres space when you can have twelve or more? It's not big, so why not open it up, but at the same time be able to close it when you want? We're not in the "all open" concept such as the loft, which is not a great solution. We're not in the "all closed" as we've had over the past decades; we have arrived at the age of CHOICE... and that's what's fundamental and that is what is going to influence the next 50 years of interior architecture.



© Photos Accor – Room 217 Sofitel Arc de Triomphe. Designer: Michel Gicquel

Accor's Innovations & Design Department

Accor's Innovations & Design Department is made up of 20 people, mainly architects or interior designers, who work on both new projects and renovation in all the Accor Group Brands, from Formule 1 to the Sofitel. Their goal is to guarantee the coherence of the projects and integrity of each Brand by working alongside with Architects, Designers, Landscape Architects, Lighting Engineers, etc. Their three strategic priorities are design management, technological innovation, and product innovation.

How does technology fit into this?

The layout of hotel rooms, and the layout of the home habitat will be centred on adaptability and flexibility and that's where technology comes into play, because if we didn't have our nomadic technologies, this concept would not work; my theory would not work. You have to be able to work on your bed, or in the bathroom, you have to be able to drive all the systems. So at the same time, you have an environmental constraint which means the habitat will not be bigger, because one square metre is two and a half cubic metres to heat or cool, and that's a cost and we can't afford that! So the only way to obtain more space is to make the space we have better adapted to its functions. In other words, why make a kitchen in a room of four square metres if you can have another perspective. Why close yourself in the bathroom to take a bath if you're all alone? Even if you're not alone it can be nice or even fun! Only recently, we have discovered, having studied biorhythms, that when we are alone, we have different needs depending on moods. If our biorhythms are down, we have a tendency to want to be "closed in" or to "cocoon".

When, on the other hand, one's biorhythms open up, the same person, all alone, in the same habitat, will be able to play with the flexibility of space. It's only very recently that we have come to understand this. It means we won't need more space tomorrow, because this adaptability will enable us to reduce the overall space, but increase the level of comfort. In addition to this, on the one hand, we have beds that are getting bigger, because people have been getting taller in the post-war era, and at the same time, we have televisions that take up a lot less room. The bed used to be 190 cm long in the 1960's, and today it's 2.10 metres; but luckily at the same time, the CRT TV that used to take up 45 cm now only takes up 10 or 12 cm since the onset of LCD TV. If you take the hotel room, where the TV is most often facing the bed, finally the conjugation of the two means that we have recovered some space! Not bad! At the same time they say we should use less space because of energy usage, but we also travel a lot faster with smaller baggage and fewer clothes. So is the dressing area really useful? In many cases, it can be reduced. Here we are no longer talking about decoration; we are talking about the fundamentals of space. This is typically the criterion of a fundamental mutation of society. You have macro-evolutions and micro-evolutions and we live the latter every day. But for a macro-evolution to become possible, there needs to



© Photos: Accor – Room 307 Sofitel Paris Le Faubourg. Designer: Christophe Daudré

be a conjunction between the various phenomena, meaning the constraints and the responses to those constraints. This is exactly what is happening today. Living spaces are being re-constructed. If you look at the concept room here at the Pullman hotel, it was made with the aim of translating a new way of living spaces. The technologies we have used for this are part of the sum, but the veritable mutation is the reflection on space. This has nothing to do with technology, but technology is what allows it. So one should not confuse the issues here, because technology for technology's sake has no interest. It is only there to accompany a mutation of society, and here we are really in the midst of a profound mutation.

We have seen that your concept rooms take account of this evolution... but what about the new guestrooms that are rolling out in your latest renovations and new builds? Will these follow the trends you mention?

Yes, the layout will completely change. It's a case of playing with flexibility and transparency. It's the way of appropriating space that's different. Then, the technologies we install, whether they be behind new materials or those that we generally talk about today... in both cases, they will be out of date in five years! We know this. On the other hand, what will not be outdated in the next decades will be this new way of using spaces. I believe we have been able to transmute this very well in our new rooms. What we verified with regard to this, when there was some doubt as to whether clients really wanted this schema, the inverse was true. The guests appropriate it completely, and I find that great. There have been some aberrations however. There

is, for example a hotel where they put the bath next to the bed, which is completely stupid. This is just done for the principle of surprise, but one should not take hotel guests for idiots. It's not a fundamental reflection on society. If there is adaptability and flexibility and the user understands how it works, and hence appropriates it, he uses the spaces as he wants, in function with his desires. It's the first time in the evolution of the habitat and the hotel that once the client closes the door he can organise it as he wants. There are of course limits to this, such as being able to move the bed, as the guest is only there for a short time.

How are the Accor Group's concept rooms tested?

It is very important that the guests be accompanied at the outset. We want to test the reaction of clients to new products that they have probably never used before. If we throw them the keys and leave them to their own devices, they may understand a certain number of things, but there are some things they may miss because we didn't take ten minutes to explain. That would be a shame, because these rooms have unbelievable technology in them.

Do guests have to pay more to use the concept room?

No. The price is the same as a standard room. We didn't want price to be a barrier... but for many it has been a "must" to have the privilege of staying in the concept room. These are rooms we don't just give to anybody. We only give them to clients we know are interested in staying in a concept room, and in this sense they know they may encounter technology they don't



© Photos: Accor – Room 307 Sofitel Paris Le Faubourg. Designer: Christophe Dauré

know already. This being the case, they are prepared to spend a little time learning about what's inside. An example is that of recycled or recyclable materials. We need to explain this to the guest, as we can't put tags on everything.

It's true, sometimes we need instructions even when it's not a concept room!

Yes, because the engineer designing the room was perhaps left to his own devices, and that's the worst thing one can do. I'm well placed to know that! Sometimes they forget the affordance of the client, that is to say the comprehension by the client of the products. The success of a hotel room by definition comes from the capacity of the guest to comprehend the technology, the product, or even the space. Once we enter the room we should be in a "no stress zone". That's my definition of a hotel room, and that's why we do these kinds of tests. Anything that has an effect to the contrary, we have to try to understand why.

If there is flexibility, one should understand whether a door pivots or slides in order to open the space. If you have to take time to find the handle with which to slide the door it means we've got it all wrong. And if, when a woman slides the door, she breaks a nail, we also have it wrong. This is all part of affordance – the understanding of spaces and the comprehension of how we can transform and appropriate them. This is true for volumes, it's true for objects and it's true for technologies, whatever they may be... and that's fundamental. So what has been the reasoning behind the concept rooms? The first one was completed in 1997, and it was a huge success. It was fully automated, and featured the

first autonomous colour touch panel by Crestron in the world. It was worth almost 7,000 euros! Consequently we mounted it on the wall to avoid someone dropping it on the floor! We weren't worried about people stealing it, because they couldn't have done anything with it, but we were concerned someone may drop it. We learned that in-room automation was very poorly perceived by most guests, despite the fact that they were willing participants in the test. It wasn't part of their mentality, due to the fact they didn't have it at home or in the office... they had never used it anywhere, so it necessitated a huge amount of effort. So all the systems in my values are bypassed. In other words, you have the choice between in-room automation or classic controls; you have the choice between biometrics or a magnetic room card... you have the choice. I don't like the concept of big brother. I prefer to give people choice. And as soon as you have the choice, you tend to go for the thing that's a little more amusing or exciting, because you are not constrained, so it becomes a game. We noted with the first, the second, and even the latest concept rooms that in-room automation was poorly perceived. It's getting better and better, but it remains complex. That said, today, what used to be a sticking point is now, 12 years later, finally starting to be appreciated by some guests. So we were right to have imagined its use, but it was much too early.

Another example in that first room, room 217, was that we had five fragrances, one anti-tobacco (at the time it was possible to smoke in the rooms), two dynamic fragrances and two relaxing fragrances. The guest that arrives in the hotel either heads back

out and hits the town with his friends, or otherwise wants to relax and sleep. In that research, we tested 50 fragrances and now we know which ones are really relaxing and which ones give a really dynamic feeling. The olfactory sense has a major effect on people. What we noted when testing this is that while the other senses are instantaneous, it takes at least a few minutes for a fragrance to diffuse throughout a room.

Consequently, some people would say, 'Hey this doesn't work!' and we had to tell them to wait a few minutes. In the knowledge of this, we consequently advised guests that they would have to wait for the fragrance to penetrate the room.

Being able to introduce these innovations must give you a great amount of satisfaction...

No. There is no question of being satisfied... that's rubbish, and would be totally pretentious. Simply it is driving oneself to obtain the right kind of reflection on the matter, but there is no satisfaction to be had from being right! That remark is embarrassing. It's not a question of satisfaction. You work with people... you look at the world around you...

But you are among the only ones ... This kind of reflection is beyond the ordinary...

Listen... think about it... the reflection perhaps... I am an engineer by trade. Whether we be numerous or not to think about this, there is not the least satisfaction to be gleaned from the reflection. I have a passion for habitat; I have a passion for art history, and studying the way our habitat has evolved over time. We are looking at a major mutation in humanity. It's a "virtual" mutation. People live in the city and they escape virtually, via the Internet. I'm not a specialist in research; I simply observe what is going on around me. One should simply be pragmatic.



© Photo: Accor – Room 217 Sofitel Arc de Triomphe. Designer: Christophe Daudré



Into The Surreal

The Accor Concept Rooms – “You Ain’t Seen Nothin’ Yet”

Those who have marvelled over “concept cars” on show at the Geneva and Paris motor shows no doubt know that these marvels of innovations and technologies will never be seen on the road. In the hotel world, the 4 Accor concept rooms, built over the past eleven years, are based on the same principle. Michel Gicquel explains...

We want to test the reaction of clients to new products that they have probably never imagined before. These are rooms we don’t just give to anybody. We only give them to clients we know are interested in staying in a concept room, and in this sense they know they may encounter technology they haven’t already encountered. This being the case, they are prepared to spend a little time learning about what’s inside. The success of a hotel room by definition comes from the capacity of the guest to instinctively apprehend the technology, the product, or even the space. Once we enter the room we should be in a “no stress zone”.

That’s my definition of a hotel room, and that’s why we do these kinds of tests. Anything that has an affect to the contrary, we have to try to understand why. If there is flexibility, one should understand whether a door pivots or slides in order to open the space. If you have to take time to find the handle with which to slide the door it means we’ve got it all wrong. And if, when a woman slides the door, she breaks a nail, we also have it wrong.

This is all part of affordance – the understanding of spaces and the comprehension of how we can transform and appropriate them. This is true for volumes, it’s true for objects and it’s true for technologies, whatever they may be... and that’s fundamental.

Did guests have to pay more to use the concept room?

No. The price is the same as a standard room. We didn’t want price to be a barrier... but for many it has been a “must” to have the privilege of staying in the concept room.

Who gathers and analyses the feedback from the concept rooms?

It’s the hotel director who gathers the comments, but we very quickly realised that in all four concept rooms, the remarks always converge on the same points. For example, with regard to the in-room automation, it was virtually universal.

**Natacha Froger
Interior Architect
Atome Associés**

A graduate in Interior Architecture, Natacha Froger created Atome Associés in 2005, as having managed other structures, she strongly wished to develop her business around a subject that had always been a passion, and had, in part been the reason for her training: the hotel sector. Today, Atome Associés is a team that for the most part works on hotel projects and has the chance in this sense to manage projects of differing styles on several continents.



Sources of Inspiration...

Atome's Natacha Froger – at the forefront of innovation

Innovation is today one of the most precious facets of interior designers, allowing them among other things to offer increasingly pertinent responses. In one sense, innovation rhymes with new products, but also to adapted solutions, even more so in these turbulent times, because it is a guarantee of a project's success in both ergonomic and economic terms. The ATOME agency has been involved in several major innovative projects with the Accor Group including the "Concept Room". We asked Atome's Natacha Froger, renowned in this field, what she had learned from the concept room...

To say "a lot" would be far from the truth. It was a passionate adventure... for several reasons. This process, initiated by Michel Gicquel a number of years back and reinitiated two years ago, among other things with "Room 1014", has allowed us to develop a non consensual product remaining very much in a "hotel" spirit. The elements that are highlighted in this space, both from a technological and an ergonomic point of view, remain entirely linked to the constraints of their use; just like the development of the concept and its realisation in terms of time frame and reactivity.

As Mr Gicquel has explained, the way people use living space is changing. What is your view of this evolution?

It is evident that designing a space without taking account of the evolution of societies is senseless. My prime source of inspiration remains the work accomplished by numerous sociologists, ethnologists and other researchers, who give us the essential keys. For example, the ever more precise knowledge of our body allows us to understand

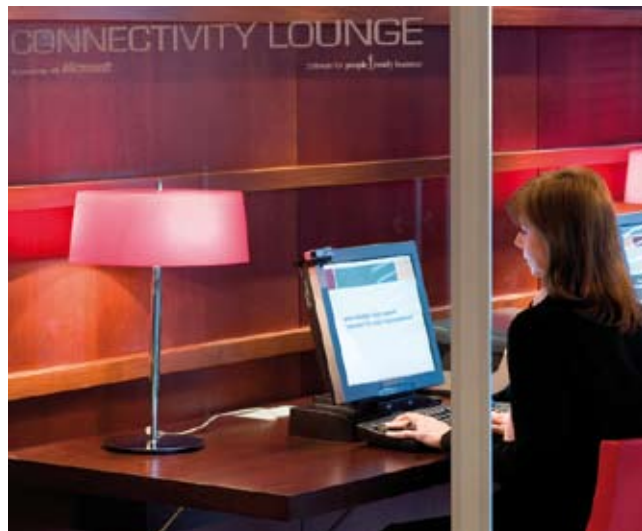
that comfortable postures are not systematically the same. Asymmetry is just one, which leads to an appropriate design. Notions of distance, space or sonority that vary from one culture to another are today embellished with new codes linked to media consumption, but also needs for space, an omnipresent feeling of comfort or security... all playing a part on our conception of volumes.

What, to your mind, are the most interesting technological advances, auguring for the future?

The "suppleness" of technological elements with which our eyes and hands are confronted is increasingly important. Technology as an "elongation of ourselves", already imagined by numerous authors, may appear to be frightening, but this is more and more palpable. An example is the dematerialisation of supports such as TV screens, as we have transcribed in "Room 1014" with our holographic film. Our environment is tending to become increasingly less visually polluted, in accordance with intuitive technology.



© Photos: Accor



The Pullman Concept

The New “Upper Scale” Brand of the Accor Group Aims for “Tech Friendliness”

The Pullman brand was launched in December 2007 around the concept of defining the “right product for the international business traveller”. We met with Denys Sappey at Accor HQ near Paris, where we asked him to explain the new concept...

We wanted to create a new way of living in the hospitality business – the “client experience” in the upper scale market. The Pullman concept sits in the upscale segment, right between the luxury segment which is occupied by the Sofitel brand following its repositioning, and Novotel and Mercure, which are respectively our midscale brands, in the non-standardised and standardised hotel segment. As part of a repositioning of brands within the group, we had 180 Sofitel of which around 150 were more eligible to be renovated to target the luxury segment, the Pullman story started when Accor Hospitality decided to re-invent a concept, on the upscale hospitality segment. Pullman targets the business market. Within this sector we find solo business travellers, but there is also the enterprise seminars and conventions activity, which is our priority segment. The ambition was not only to reinvent the “hard” product, but also the “soft” product – that is to say the service and marketing.





© Photo: Accor – Pullman Concept Room Paris Bercy

What are the clients' reactions to this new concept?

Very encouraging and very enthusiastic. We're right at the start, but the signals and feedback from the market are very positive. Our clients like the concept... they like the technology... the level of comfort and the service we are providing, so let's go, rolling this out in the network in the scale we want. We're on the right way.

Part of the concept is that of being a "tech friendly" hotel. How important is that as part of the Pullman concept?

It's a very, very important criterion for business travellers and international visitors when they're choosing a hospitality brand today. So we are currently investing a lot in putting this technology at the level expected by the client when it comes to getting connected to their professional and personal environments in a user-friendly way.

So the international traveller can find everything they want in terms of technological comfort?

Yes indeed! We are providing as much as we could expect our clients to ask for, even with basic equipment such as chairs, tables and screens, to make them as comfortable to use as possible.

There are so many technologies out there today that it's impossible to buy everything and install it in the hotel. How do you select technologies? Is there an internal reflection group working on this?

We listen to the market, we listen to our clients and constantly adapt our offer according to what is essential for them at this level of hospitality – the upscale segment – permanently asking them how they feel about our product and the level of equipment. The client experience is for us a key stake for the future of our brand.



Denys Sappey
Managing Director
Pullman France

Denys Sappey was named Managing Director of Pullman France on the 1st December 2007 by Yann Caillère, Managing Director of the Accor Hotel group in France, Southern Europe, Middle East and Africa, and CEO Sofitel WW. Mr Sappey is a graduate of the IEA Paris and CEDEP at the INSEAD. He debuted his professional career in the Europcar International group as head of sales before joining the Accor group in 1998, from which time he exercised various functions linked to the commercial development in the hotel field. In 2006 he was named S.V.P. International Sales, before being appointed his current position.



The New Pullman Paris Tour Eiffel

Young Parisian agency to continue in Loewy's spirit

Comments by Michel Gicquel, written and edited by Richard Barnes

Anyone who has ever drunk from a bottle of Coca Cola is familiar with Raymond Loewy's design work. From the prestigious work he completed on John F. Kennedy's Air Force One to the design of locomotives and the familiar Greyhound Bus, Loewy's efforts had no bounds. He has long been considered the most famous of all American industrial designers. To this end, this particular work, at the very heart of Paris, adds to the dichotomous interest of this hotel, a true statement about post-war Franco-American relations.



The ex-Eiffel Tower Hilton hotel is an extraordinary, paradoxical hotel and one of which very few people know the story. It was a hotel signed in '63 by one of the biggest names of the epoch in interior and industrial design, Raymond Loewy. It's one of the rare hotels he designed. In the post-war era, in Paris, and indeed around the world, there were very few hotels that were designed with that kind of scope, so it's a hotel that fundamentally marked its epoch. In the four corners of the globe, when one talks about the Eiffel Tower Hilton hotel, anyone who is anyone knows it. The gastronomic restaurant and bar were incredible meeting places, hosting many famous names. The walls could tell a thousand stories! It has a history like no other hotel in the Pullman group, and I hope this incredibly rich history will be reflected through the renovation of the establishment. There are very few hotels in the world that have this kind of legitimacy from that particular period. There are of course those historic hotels that have won their stripes over the years. This one also gained them, but they were forgotten, and now the hotel will be reborn. With a position as the closest hotel to the Eiffel Tower there won't be another one like it... it's one of the most mythical locations in the world, and this hotel is part of the history of the quarter.

We made a call for bids and a young, extremely creative Parisian agency, called Atome (see page 8, interview with Natacha Froger), won the contract. While they are small, the originality of their concepts is what differentiates them from many of the others, and they aim to continue in the spirit of Loewy. The façade has been redesigned by architect Jean-Paul Viguier.