

A Trilogy Model

An Interview with Peter Strebel, Chairman, Omni Hotels & Resorts

EDITORS' NOTE Recently named a 2019 Top CEO by Glassdoor, Peter Strebel is Chairman of Omni Hotels & Resorts, a position he assumed in May 2022. In this role, Strebel provides strategic counsel to the company, and continues to elevate the vision of Omni regarding long-term goals and objectives for the brand. A 30-year-plus veteran of the hospitality industry, he works with teams to continue to enhance the existing high-level of guest service as well as oversee the growth and expansion plans the brand has in the pipeline.



Peter Strebel

As the company's former President, Chief Marketing Officer, and Senior Vice President of Sales, Strebel was responsible for guiding the company through the pandemic crisis, leaving the brand in a prime position to capitalize on the rebounding trends and changes in the industry. He also was instrumental in creating and driving innovative branding, communications, marketing and business development strategies to increase awareness, capture market share and build revenue for the luxury hotel brand. Strebel also formerly served as Senior Vice President of Operations for the company where he oversaw the development of brand-wide property standards, guest rooms and other operational areas for Omni's growing convention collection and resort portfolio. A long-term Omni veteran, Strebel rejoined Omni in 2009 as Area Managing Director and General Manager of the company's flagship property in midtown Manhattan, the award-winning Omni Berkshire Place. During his previous tenure at Omni, he had a successful 10-year career in sales and marketing positions of increasing responsibility, ultimately leading to his appointment as vice president of sales and marketing. In between his time with Omni, Strebel served as Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer for the Wyndham Hotel Group and was promoted to President of the company before returning to Omni. Strebel sits on the board of directors for AHLA, as well as the board of trustees for the Incarnation House in Dallas, Texas. Strebel graduated from Hofstra University with a bachelor of business administration degree.

COMPANY BRIEF Omni Hotels & Resorts (omnihotels.com) creates genuine, authentic guest experiences at 60 distinct luxury hotels

and resorts in leading business and leisure destinations across North America. With more than 25 iconic golf courses and 16 award-winning spas featured in dynamic locales nationwide, every Omni proudly opens its doors to share the true spirit of its destination. Reflected through local color, personalized service, unique wellness options, signature restaurants and creative culinary offerings, Omni leaves a lasting impression with every guest and a heightened level of recognition and rewards delivered

through its Select Guest loyalty program. As a founding member of the Global Hotel Alliance, Select Guest is further expanded through the DISCOVERY® loyalty program offering members additional global benefits. Omni is committed to reducing hunger and is on a mission through its Say Goodnight to Hunger initiative to provide millions of meals each year for food banks to feed children, families and seniors in communities in which it operates. Omni Hotels & Resorts is the official hotel of the PGA TOUR and PGA TOUR Champions.

How do you describe Omni Hotels & Resorts' culture and how critical is culture to the success of the company?

Family culture is the key to our success. Omni Hotels & Resorts operates as a family and believes in a trilogy model, which is, we look out for our associates, our customers, and our owners.

What have been the keys to Omni Hotels & Resorts' industry leadership and how do you define the Omni difference?

The Omni Hotels & Resorts' industry leadership is based on its ownership model. Omni is one of the very few hotel companies that own and operate the majority of their assets. The difference is that most of the other companies are highly segmented and franchised. They have many different operators involved in each piece of real estate unlike Omni which has the same owner, operator and brand. This enables Omni to move quickly and be more nimble.

Will you highlight Omni Hotels & Resorts' current developments and plans for growth?

Omni Hotels & Resorts current developments include Omni PGA Frisco Resort, Omni



View from a terrace at the Omni Berkshire Place in New York City



Omni PGA Frisco Resort

Fort Lauderdale Hotel, Omni Tempe Hotel at ASU, and Omni in Pontoque, Mexico. Key restorations and major redevelopments include The Omni Homestead Resort, Omni Charlottesville Hotel, Omni Severin Hotel in Indianapolis, Omni Tucson National Resort, Omni Interlocken Hotel in Denver, Colorado, and Omni Orlando Resort at ChampionsGate.

How did Omni Hotels & Resorts adapt the way it works to address the challenges caused by the pandemic?

Omni Hotels & Resorts developed a “lose less” strategy to deal with the pandemic. Due to our size and ownership, we were able to reopen quicker. All of our resorts were reopened by Memorial Day weekend of 2020. As a result, we survived and prospered and still maintained a profit in 2020. Our ownership model and close ties to our associates resulted in a retention rate of over 50 percent.

What are your views on the current state of travel as it recovers from the pandemic?

Travel is back. In fact, group travel is experiencing an increase because as companies are doing more work from home, employees need to build that camaraderie and culture. Group travel is going to continue to be on the rise because companies need to get together in person for meetings. I believe that being contained for two years has made people realize that family and friends are extremely important and that’s going to be the impetus for more leisure travel. On the other hand, business travel will probably never get back to where it was because technology has come into play on some less important meetings.

How critical is it for Omni Hotels & Resorts to build a diverse and inclusive workforce?

It is very critical for Omni Hotels & Resorts to have a diverse and inclusive workforce. We are very customer centric and by having an inclusive workforce that represents our customers, we are aware of all their

needs. Sustaining an inclusive workplace that represents Omni’s many different viewpoints, cultures, and backgrounds creates a welcoming environment for all.

What do you see as Omni Hotels & Resorts’ responsibility to the communities it serves and to be a force for good in society?

Even though we are a global brand called Omni Hotels and Resorts, we operate on the street, in a city, in the town. Many of our employees are from the community. We work with many of the local catering and social businesses. Our communities support us by having their weddings and bar mitzvahs, events, and meetings at our hotels, and visiting friends and relatives. We give back through our national

platform called Say Goodnight to Hunger. Omni is committed to helping the local communities in which we are located, so these donations will directly benefit food banks in the 42 communities where Omni Hotels & Resorts’ 50 properties operate.

How do you describe your management style?

My management style is collaborative. You have to manage up, down, and across, and you have to figure out your strategy for each three disciplines. My management mantras are passion, focus, energy, and drive.

What advice do you offer to young people interested in building a career in the hospitality industry?

When you follow your passion in life, you’re happier overall. I was always fascinated by travel, and I started out walking from school to my uncle’s deli, passing the travel agencies to pick up the brochures. My parents took us on a lot of trips, most of them were by road, but I loved to travel. I started out at an entry level position after college as a desk clerk sitting at the front desk at midnight, saying, “I want to get ahead, I want to be somebody, I want to be the boss.” And it’s been a phenomenal career for me both personally, professionally, financially, spiritually, and emotionally. It’s been a real big success story for me, and what’s nice about it is that my dad always said, “you can be anything you want to be.”

Employees who have drive and proficiency will surely stand out. If you push beyond your job description, you will be immediately noticed as a superstar, opposed to those who are just looking at it as a job versus a career versus a calling. The hospitality industry is still one of the few industries where you don’t need a college degree to rise through the ranks by showing that passion and proficiency. ●



Rendering of a ballroom at the Omni Tempe Hotel at ASU