



### RAVENHOUSE HELPS MID-SCALE PROPERTY CHART NEW TERRITORY

Mexico City – An international hotel chain previously offering only limited service is charting new territory. RavenHouse consultants were in Mexico City this past January for a site visit and Executive Alignment meeting with a new client. In conjunction with the management team, RavenHouse consultants are working to develop service standards and procedures that are new to a traditionally limited service brand, including room service, spa services, business center, restaurants, and a full array of guest services. Moving beyond the basic limited service model, the owner and management group plan to introduce this suite of services and amenities to cater to a new and emerging market.

“We’re shooting for five star, so we are offering an experience that’s above and beyond what people typically associate with the flag and any other five star property,” commented Leesa LeClaire, a RavenHouse consultant working on the project.

#### WHERE SERVICE AND SALES MEET

RavenHouse consultants recently started a project helping a major player in the timeshare industry to build and implement a sales-driven business model. “We first worked with one region to introduce the fundamental principles of consultative selling,” explains Senior Managing Director Bobbie Shreiner. “However, after our initial training, it quickly became clear that this smaller project could produce results throughout the rest of the company. People started sitting up and taking notice – including senior management.”

Based on the feedback from a meeting last fall, RavenHouse spoke with Senior Management about how to make sure the initiative produced the desired results. They devised that each region should gradually shift to a sales based model that emphasizes the importance of relationships – those between the timeshare provider, the developers, and of course – the end users themselves. It requires a shift in priorities and in thinking – but that’s what any breakthrough takes.

“What we focus on is keeping the momentum from our face-to-face sessions to provide our clients with the knowledge and confidence they need to excel.” After working with managers at the national level, RavenHouse consultants built a model for each region to rethink its sales process and balance its own need for growth with its clients’ need for more customers. This also involves the end-users themselves, who are in increasing demand given the number of options and outlets for the timeshare industry.

“We’re very excited about taking this program to the national level. We have a long way to go, and the work will be challenging, but that’s what makes it rewarding,” Shreiner said.

This approach introduces some basic challenges, and the RavenHouse team will be on-site over the next few months to work with the hotel staff to manage the opening, training and launch of the property and offered services. “We’re currently working with the management team to develop all the standards and procedures,” LeClaire said.

The question of how receptive the business traveler will be to this property remains to be answered, but the project is another great opportunity for RavenHouse to work with its client from conception to delivery of a new and unique hospitality model. It’s also a chance for the RavenHouse team to learn some new lessons as well: “The rest of my colleagues all speak Spanish fluently,” LeClaire said, “but I’ve enrolled in a three week emersion class to bring myself up to speed. It’s been terrific – and I’m picking it up faster than expected.”

#### A DIFFERENT APPROACH

After a complete building renovation and rebranding, a Mid-western real estate investment company opened the doors to its flagship full service hotel in January 2006. RavenHouse joined the project to guide the way through the entire pre-opening process and to ensure that this first hotel was poised to break into the market successfully.

In order to make sure the opening ran smoothly, RavenHouse assembled a task team of its consultants to serve as a temporary management team and pre-opening staff. This group worked closely with the owning group to develop all operating system, select and train the staff that would eventually assume management of all operations. RavenHouse consultants were phased out as the full-time employees were selected, trained and brought on full-time. It allowed for thorough training and a smooth transition.

“We were given the opportunity to engage to a much fuller degree than usual,” remarked Andres Borden, founding Partner and on-site supervisor of this project. “We worked in tandem with the ownership team to select, train, and develop a team of associates to manage and supervise all functions that come with a full-service hotel.

RavenHouse International was formed as a successor to Victoria International Corporation and Evergreen Associates. We continue a 38 year tradition: to help our clients define and confidently pursue winning strategies in the marketplace, to put a human face on services and to build strong management capabilities.

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