

# **HSMAI Profile: Mia Touzin Leffler**

## **Mia Touzin Leffler** **Education Adviser** **HSMAI Region Europe**

**Mia Touzin Leffler is an international academic with a passion for professional development within hospitality and tourism.**

As Senior Fellow, the Higher Education Academy in England, the organisation for quality assurance within British universities, Mia is External Examiner at Ulster University in Belfast. Her academic background includes being head of the hospitality and event management education at the large University of West London, academic lead of the BSc programme at the private Glion Hotel School in Switzerland and lecturer at Cornell University when they had a teaching centre at IMHI Essec in Paris. Her academic education includes a MSc with Merit in Tourism & Hospitality Management and Education from Surrey University together with earlier studies in human resources management in the UK and hotel management at Glion.

Mia Touzin Leffler's earlier career was in the industry, as head of management development and training with Sheraton EAME & South Asia and prior to that as Human Resources Manager, Holiday Inns Europe. This was followed by a period as independent with quite large, long term projects around work method changes, service concepts and sales training programmes for Disney Paris, the Europcar – Perot Systems partnership and Air Miles before landing in academia with three children tagging along. Mia grew up in Gothenburg, Sweden, is married to a Frenchman and has spent her adult life based in England, France, Switzerland, Germany and in Australia. Mia is not

working fulltime now but with projects instead to have the time to live as well!

**Q: What does a day at work consist of for you?**

**A:** A difficult question as the weeks now vary. Two weeks ago, I attended the HSMIAI Leadership Day in Frankfurt, presenting Winning for Customers, the Service Pledge programme and what has been done since last year. This week, I have been in the middle of France, north of Bordeaux, where the priorities were to preserve the harvest of tomatoes, peaches and apricots so that we can bring them with us. In between, emails to follow up on the Frankfurt talk and then out to work in the garden! Next, in the car and back to London.

**Q: What's the best part of your job?**

**A:** The flexibility, adapting to opportunities and all the engaging, enthusiastic people that I meet. Also, to watch the glittering eye of a youth who has discovered their passion.

**Q: Do you have anyone you've looked up to?**

**A:** Different managers that I have worked with over the years and these youngsters who have been through all sorts of experiences, coming through the stronger for it.

**Q: Do you have any nice traditions at your office?**

**A:** To get academics to be in one location at the same time to either socialize or work as a team can be a major undertaking but when it is achieved it has a very positive effect, reducing stress levels and on how they enjoy their work and the achievements of their students.

**Q: How long have you been a member of HSMIAI?**

**A:** Was involved with HSMIAI Region Europe in 2015 and much more since a year.

**Q: What do you think is the best thing about HSMIAI?**

**A:** The ability to get all these energetic, engaging people at varying stages of their careers and experiences together. The ability and sensitivity to pick up on trends and what really matters.

**Q: Are there any activities or projects you think HSMIAI should start up?**

**A:** Winning for Customers, the Service Pledge to help quality assure the experiences that the customers are promised. HSMIAI Region Europe are well underway with this.

**Q: Describe your perfect weekend.**

**A:** Either with my very young grandchildren, living in Rome. Intense, both physically and emotionally and fantastic. Or amongst my roses that I prune ending up with a back ache but then it is lovely to go for a swim.

**Q: If you were trapped on a desert island, what would you take with you, if you could choose one thing?**

**A:** Something that I could use to make tools for fishing and living. Think I would find it difficult to sit still.

**Q: How will someone who knows you describe you?**

**A:** A conceptual mind with a practical pair of hands. Or what a hotel manager in Liverpool once called me: 'a brick' (!! ) He said it meant, dependable and trust worthy. I hope that they also say 'with a sense of humour and a big supply of patience'.

**Q: What is your next travel destination?**

**A:** The next private trip goes to Rome, to the grand children! 25<sup>th</sup> October I participate in a HSMIAI Advisory Board project meeting in London where I live and the 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> November I

will be in Oslo for the next Executive Coach workshop for Winning for Customers, the Service Pledge.

**Q: Do you have any special hobbies?**

**A:** Hobby? I used to ski a lot in Scandinavia and in the Alpes growing up, travelling by coach from Gothenburg on Friday night and back in education Monday morning, bleary eyed. Later, with my children finding new paths through the birch trees. Recently, it is gardening (whole heartedly!), swimming, the grandchildren and reading. At least, I manage to find time for some of this now as during many years, there was too little spare time.

**Q: Thank you for your time. Do you have any personal comments?**

**A:** I come back from every HSMIAI Region Europe event incredibly stimulated by your enthusiasm and how engaged and involved you all are. I look forward to many more meetings like that. You really are a great 'bunch'. Well done!!

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## **HSMAI Profile: John Power**

**John Power**  
**VP of EMEA Sales**  
**Travel Tripper**

Travel Tripper have become a valued partner of HSMAI Region Europe. Together we will put more focus on the independent hotels in Europe. You will meet John from Travel Tripper in [Barcelona](#), [Madrid](#), [London](#) and [Dublin](#) for our Roadshow.

**Q:** What does a day at work consist of for you?

**A:** As the VP of Sales in the EMEA region, I am responsible for overseeing the growth and success of Travel Tripper here in Europe, where we are a relatively new company. One of the most exciting aspects of my job is that no 2 days are ever the same. Online demos, meetings, calls and contract negotiations are part of everyday life as well as working alongside and supporting my sales team. I also work closely with our marketing team to ensure we are getting our branding correct, attending the right shows, and growing our name recognition in Europe.

**Q:** What's the best part of your job?

**A:** Traveling with work is amazing, but being able to educate hoteliers and sell technology to different regions is a huge undertaking. Learning about the selling cultures and business models of different countries is incredible rewarding , both for Travel Tripper and myself.

**Q:** Do you have anyone you've looked up to?

**A:** In business, I have always looked at Ryanair's CEO Micheal O'Leary as someone to look up to. Micheal has transformed Ryanair into one of the most profitable budget airlines in the world, and has forced the aviation industry to rethink its business models for the 21st century. I may not agree with all his methods, but maybe this is why he is the billionaire.

**Q:** Do you have any nice traditions at your office?

**A:** Having an office full of salespeople brings plenty of competition. We have weekly competition evenings. We are very lucky to have a table tennis in the office with leads to many broken hearts as well as bruised egos. We also have our sales leader board and bell for new clients that are signed.

**Q:** How long have you been a member of HSMIAI?

**A:** As Travel Tripper is new to Europe, we are new members to

HSMIAI. However, I have been involved with the HSMIAI for many years with several different companies.

**Q:** What do you think is the best thing about HSMIAI?

**A:** It is so important that we have organisations like HSMIAI to bring this sector together and share our thoughts and knowledge in as many regions as possible.

**Q:** Are there any activities or projects you think HSMIAI should start up?

**A:** We would like to see stronger involvement with independent hotels in Europe, as they are the lifeblood of the hospitality industry here. The smaller properties often don't have the same access to resources and useful information as the bigger brands and groups do. Having educational activities that targets this particular group is important.

**Q:** Describe your perfect weekend.

**A:** I am a total outdoor junkie, so if I'm not taking part in triathlons or going on Sunday morning cycling trips, I'm probably windsurfing or taking part in some sort of water based activity. After both I love to socialise with family and friends.

**Q:** If you were trapped on a desert island, what would you take with you, if you could choose one thing?

**A:** My surfboard.

**Q:** What is the title of the book about your life?

**A:** Can't stop, won't stop!

**Q:** What is your next travel destination?

**A:** Tarifa in Spain. Its actually the most southern point of Spain. I've been going to Tarifa for over 25 years, it's amazing. One of the best places in the world to windsurf.

**Q:** Do you have any special hobbies?

**A:** Water sports such as windsurfing, standup paddle boarding, and surfing. If the waves aren't great I love cycling and running.

**Q:** Thank you for your time. Do you have any personal comments?

**A:** The hospitality sector is constantly evolving and as such, we need as many events and platforms to share our knowledge as possible. The HSMIAI has a very important role within this sector, bringing both its members and vendors together so we can listen and learn from each others' experiences.

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## **HSMIAI Region Europe Profile:** **Michael McCartan**

**Michael McCartan**  
**Managing Director, EMEA**  
**Duetto**

**Michael McCartan is a valued member of HSMIAI Region Europe's Revenue Management Advisory Board. Duetto is also one of HSMIAI Region Europe ROC Gold Partners. See also *The Ultimate Guide to Hotel Revenue Strategy* below.**

**Q:** What does a day at work consist of for you?

**A:** I don't have a typical day. Some days I'm on the road meeting clients and prospects, some days I'm at events meeting interesting people and giving presentations, and other days I'm in the office or working from home. Variety is the spice

of life and my job has plenty of that.

**Q:** What's the best part of your job?

**A:** The hospitality industry is full of vibrant and interesting people and I am extremely grateful that my job has given the opportunity to meet so many of them from all over the globe.

**Q:** Do you have anyone you've looked up to?

**A:** Nelson Mandela. I grew up in apartheid South Africa and the humility and forgiveness he showed to ensure a peaceful transition to democracy is unrivalled and a lesson to everyone.

**Q:** Do you have any nice traditions at your office?

**A:** Our London office is just over two year's old so no traditions as such, but Duetto has a fantastic culture. We don't think work means sitting at a desk all day. We enjoy flexible hours, working from home when necessary and a healthy dose of fun team stuff. Sometimes the best ideas are born over beers in the pub.

**Q:** How long have you been a member of HSMIAI?

**A:** 2 years.

**Q:** What do you think is the best thing about HSMIAI?

**A:** Creating an identity for the digital marketing and revenue management community. Our industry is very fragmented and HSMIAI allows professionals working in these disciplines to galvanise best practices and increase the relevance of these functions within hotel operations.

**Q:** Are there any activities or projects you think HSMIAI should start up?

**A:** I would like HSMIAI to grow its membership by being more prominent in supporting digital marketing and revenue



management professionals week by week, and not just hosting the big events and providing the CRME certification.

**Q:** Describe your perfect weekend.

**A:** A weekend in the countryside away from mod cons doing fun outdoor activities with my family. Having grown up in Africa the love of nature runs deep in my veins.

**Q:** If you were trapped on a desert island, what would you take with you, if you could choose one thing?

**A:** Being a practical person I'd say a Bear Grylls survival guide or a Swiss army knife.

**Q:** What is the title of the book about your life?

**A:** *Enjoy yourself, it's later than you think!*

**Q:** What is your next travel destination?

**A:** Cyprus for the Easter holidays.

**Q:** Do you have any special hobbies?

**A:** I still play 5-a-side football every week and occasionally I get a round of golf in when my busy schedule allows.

**Q:** Thank you for your time. Do you have any personal comments?

**A:** Here's to a successful event next week. Let ROC rock!

## **The Ultimate Guide to Hotel Revenue Strategy**

Duetto recently published their *Ultimate Guide to Hotel Revenue Strategy*, made downloadable here, as a 1.3 mb PDF (please click this front cover):



# The Ultimate Guide to Hotel Revenue Strategy

In this comprehensive ebook, learn how to navigate the hotel landscape, from core revenue management principles of segmentation and forecasting to the emerging discipline of Revenue Strategy and the breakthrough concept of Open Pricing

[DuettoResearch.com](http://DuettoResearch.com)



# **HSMAI Profile: Fabian Specht**

**Fabian Specht**  
**Managing Director, EMEA**  
**IDEaS**

**IDEaS is HSMAI Region Europe ROC Preferred Gold Partner at ROC and DOC 29 March in Amsterdam at the RAI Exhibition and Convention Centre**

**Q:** What does a day at work consist of for you?

**A:** Many calls, emails, meetings online and in person with my team, clients and partners. Supporting the team wherever I can. All located in the EMEA region. In the afternoon, because of time difference, I catch up with our HQ office in US.

**Q:** What is the best part of your job?

**A:** Being able to travel and meeting so many different people and learning about what drives them every day, what are their challenges, how they solve problems. Experiencing different cultures, people's attitudes and the way of life in different countries/regions is fantastic !

**Q:** Do you have anyone you have looked up to?

**A:** My mother and my father – always giving me that feeling of love, trust, security and interest in what I do. Always there to help, listen, assist and lead when they felt I needed it or I was asking for it. But always giving me all my freedom to develop myself and do what I felt was right for me.

**Q:** Do you have any nice traditions at your office?

**A:** In my previous job we used to have Friday Happy Hour to end the week in a positive way. All teams sitting together

casually with maybe a champagne or beer and talking about what happened this week, what was good, what was bad, what is upcoming etc. These sessions sometimes went until late into the evenings and nights really building a great team atmosphere.

**Q:** How long have you been a member of HSMIAI?

**A:** I honestly can't remember. But it has been quite a few years now.

**Q:** What do you think is the best thing about HSMIAI?

**A:** It brings people together with the same spirit, motivation and goals. Trying to make things better for the industry we all are in and spend so much energy and time on. Constantly educating and improving what we do and how we do it.

**Q:** Are there any activities or projects you think HSMIAI should start up?

**A:** I feel HSMIAI has started so many activities recently. It probably needs some time for these to settle in, develop further before embarking on new projects.

**Q:** Describe your perfect weekend.

**A:** Sleep in and enjoy a nice slow breakfast every day of the weekend, spend great time with my boys and lots of outside activity. Sometimes a short weekend escape to the sea or a city trip helps refilling the battery for an upcoming busy week.

**Q:** If you were trapped on a desert island, what would you take with you, if you could choose one thing?

**A:** Sunscreen lotion. The rest I will find on the island.

**Q:** What is the title of the book about your life?

**A:**The world is my oyster

**Q:** What is your next travel destination?

**A:** Italy for client visits

**Q:** Do you have any special hobbies?

**A:** A mixture of outside activities with and without my boys from cycling to skiing, swimming and looking after my small garden.

**Q:** Thank you for your time. Do you have any personal comments?

**A:** Thanks for the questions and all the best for the upcoming HSMIAI ROC/DOC conferences. Keep up the energy level to support the EMEA region with good events and educational programs.

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## **HSMIAI Region Europe Profile:** **Bhanu Chopra**

**Bhanu Chopra**  
**Founder & CEO**  
**RateGain**

**RateGain belongs to the exclusive club of HSMIAI Region Europe Gold Partners.**

**Q:** What does a day at work consist of for you?

**A:** I am a firm believer in setting my priorities right every day, hence my day starts with drafting out a plan for the day and setting priorities. Without a plan, there is usually so much going on that you tend to get sucked into tons of random things. I typically focus on the four most important aspects

to RateGain: team, strategy, product, and growth, and then list out the things that need to be accomplished in each area. This helps me make sure that I touch all of the major aspects of my business and do not let anything slide.

**Q:** What is the best part of your job?

**A:** Two things that I love the most are:

1. the spirited discussions with my team
2. focus on innovation to wow our clients

The time spent in engrossing and stimulating discussions with our young and talented team to challenge concepts, innovate ideas, help our clients succeed, enable employee growth etc is very satisfying and rewarding. I also equally love interacting with clients from different boundaries, seeing them grow using our solutions; it brings me absolute joy to see our customers appreciate and benefit from our innovative solutions. At RateGain, innovation is at the foundation of everything that we do for our clients and our focus as a company to achieve this is what drives me every day.

**Q:** Do you have anyone you have looked up to?

**A:** Rahul Bhatia, Owner, Indigo Airlines, is someone I really look up to.

**Q:** Do you have any nice traditions at your office?

**A:** We make sure that we celebrate success of all sizes and nature. Every little win takes us closer to our goal as accompany and as a tradition, we ensure we take a few moments to recognize & relish these milestones. Another tradition specific to RateGain is our infamous pizza party (read penalty) when deadlines are missed without a justified reason.

**Q:** How long have you been a member of HSMIAI?

**A:** We have been associated with HSMIAI since 2011.

**Q:** What do you think is the best thing about HSMAI?

**A:** HSMAI is one of the most revered hospitality knowledge centres. I like the fact that it brings in the unbiased perspective of the industry experts. It provides a platform to the industry to hobnob and discuss thought leadership, pain points, solutions, innovative ideas and the way ahead.

**Q:** Are there any activities or projects you think HSMAI should start up?

**A:** Hospitality is a vast sector, I feel, HSMAI is well associated with all the big chains and enterprise brands. However, the not so organized chunks, like independent hotels and retail businesses can also be benefitted largely with HSMAI. Swift Technology adoption can help all of this larger group to keep up the space with the intense competitive market. That being said, an HSMAI arm for Independent hotels could be a good idea to explore.

**Q:** Describe your perfect weekend.

**A:** Good workout session in the morning, followed by a good grub with family, followed by a trip to somewhere where my kids can unwind. Maybe grab a drink or two with my friends later in the night.

**Q:** If you were trapped on a desert island, what would you take with you, if you could choose one thing?

**A:** Few Pints of beers, maybe.

**Q:** What is the title of the book about your life?

**A:** My wife Megha is an author; I will let her decide that for me.

**Q:** What is your next travel destination?

**A:** Has to be Berlin, ITB calling.

**Q:** Do you have any special hobbies?

**A:** Running, socializing with likeminded people and reading books. Not to forget my passion for adventure sports. Some of the regular ones are scuba diving, sky diving and skiing.

**Q:** Thank you for your time. Do you have any personal comments?

**A:** Thank you for your support, and we look forward to stronger ties with HSMAI in the future.

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## **HSMAI Region Europe Profile:** **Michael Simon from Marriott** **International**

**Michael Simon**

**General Manager Distribution, EMEA & APAC**  
**Marriott International**

Michael is the newly elected Chair of the HSMAI Region Europe Sales Executive Advisory Board. He is very active within HSMAI Region Europe both in the Advisory Board as well as a speaker and advisor on many HSMAI Region Europe events, including activities in Germany.

**Q:** What does a day at work consist of for you?

**A:** Customers, Conference Calls, E-Mails, Meetings... When in the office and due to time zones, my day usually starts with calls with Asia – lately mostly China – in the morning, moves on to the Middle East, and then to US when they are up from 2pm



onwards. Being a single parent, I try to get out of the office relatively on time to spend time with my teenage son.

**Q:** What's the best part of your job?

**A:** Distribution is a dynamic segment that impacts all parts of the hotel business.

**Q:** Do you have anyone you've looked up to?

**A:** My parents.

**Q:** Do you have any nice traditions at your office?

**A:** I'm afraid, with the travelling to Asia, Middle East and the US, I am hardly there...

**Q:** How long have you been a member of HSMIAI?

**A:** I have been a member of HSMIAI Region Europe since 2014, and a member of the HSMIAI Region Europe Sales Executive Advisory Board since the start of its operation in 2015.

**Q:** What do you think is the best thing about HSMIAI?

**A:** I think HSMIAI Region Europe is a great platform for Education and Networking within the Hospitality Industry. Being a pan-European association it brings together industry experts with diverse backgrounds on all disciplines in Hospitality.

**Q:** Are there any activities or projects you think HSMIAI should start up?

**A:** HSMIAI Region Europe has grown rapidly in the past couple of years and has successfully started activities in many new markets in Europe. Now I look forward to the many educational programmes and initiatives under development.

**Q:** Describe your perfect weekend.

**A:** Quality time with my children.

**Q:** If you were trapped on a desert island, what would you take with you, if you could choose one thing?

**A:** Satellite telephone or more realistically a knife or axe.

**Q:** What is the title of the book about your life?

**A:** Life is a journey not a destination.

**Q:** What is your next travel-destination?

**A:** Besides the usual business travel with Marriott, actually a couple of my latest trips have been to attend HSMIAI meetings and events with the Distribution & Marketing Strategy Conference in Stockholm and the HSMIAI Region Europe Sales Executive Advisory Board meeting and Connect with HSMIAI event in Frankfurt. Next I will travel to Paris.

**Q:** Do you have any special hobbies?

**A:** I used to play European handball and still like watching the game, but my favourite activity has become downhill skiing.

**Q:** Thank you for your time. Do you have any personal comments?

**A:** I would like to thank the HSMIAI Region Europe team and the HSMIAI Region Europe Sales Executive Advisory Board for their trust and support. The Hospitality Industry is constantly changing and the Sales discipline in a dramatic transition at the moment. Therefore this is an exciting time to chair the Sales Executive Advisory Board. I believe that the combination of Juliet Howie and myself, of Sales and Distribution, fits perfectly to the dynamic environment of the industry. I look forward to working together with this group of renowned experts in the industry in order to find topics and solutions to induce the Sales talent of the future. With an international reach, HSMIAI Region Europe is the perfect

platform to bring that knowledge and support to the Sales force in the field.

*Photo: Michael Simon, General Manager Distribution EMEA & APAC, Marriott International*

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## **HSMIAI Region Europe Profile: Bård Tronvoll**

**Bård Tronvoll**  
**Professor of Marketing**  
**Hedmark University of Applied Sciences /**  
**Karlstad University**

**Bård is a member of the HSMIAI National Advisory Board in Norway and also a valued advisor on a pan-European level for HSMIAI with a special focus on two new projects: the Service Pledge and the Event Trend Barometer.**

**Q: What does a day at work consist of for you?**

**A: I am a professor of marketing at Hedmark University of Applied Sciences (Norway) and the program director of Master of Science in Business Administration programs. I am also professor at Karlstad University (Sweden) and a distinguished senior research fellow at HANKEN School of Economics (Finland). My job consists mainly of doing research and teaching. I am involved in several research projects and writing about these takes most of my day. Two of the exiting, although different, research projects I am involved in are (i) investigating the digital transformation networks undergo to**

become more service oriented and (ii) how customers change their music listening experience as the digital streaming services are growing.

Today, I have discussed the development of Service Pledge and the Event barometer with HSMIAI. As I hold a PhD in service research my passion is to make companies more service oriented. Therefore, I am pleased that with the Service Pledge I think we have a good opportunity to contribute to the focus of good service.

**Q:** What's the best part of your job?

**A:** The possibility to meet people – students, academic staff and industry leaders – and challenge them on questions like how is value created and captured? How should we do innovation in complex markets? For sure they also challenge me in my arguments. I really like these discussions.

**Q:** Do you have anyone you've looked up to?

**A:** I have several bright colleagues and students, and they put a lot of effort into research and teaching. They make the research world a nice place to be.

**Q:** Do you have any nice traditions at your office?

**A:** At Karlstad University we do the 'fika' every day at 2.30 pm, which mean that we sit together drinking coffee and discuss research and every day topics.

**Q:** How long have you been a member of HSMIAI?

**A:** I joined HSMIAI in 1993 and soon after I had the fortune to be part of the board of HSMIAI. I have continued be a member of the board since then.

**Q:** What do you think is the best thing about HSMIAI?

**A:** I appreciate the ambition of HSMIAI and their ability to

deliver exiting arrangements.

**Q:** Describe your perfect weekend.

**A:** I like travelling and I have just visited Nice with my wife for a weekend; warm weather, good food and some fine attractions is ingredients for a perfect weekend.

**Q:** If you were trapped on a desert island, what would you take with you, if you could choose one thing?

**A:** My PC!

**Q:** What is the title of the book about your life?

**A:** Difficult, describing the professional life it could be – “The academic journey of Service”

**Q:** What is your next travel-destination?

**A:** I am going to an academic conference in Stockholm next week.

*Photo: Bård Tronvoll*

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## [HSMAI Region Europe Profile:](#) [Jarle Moen](#)

**Jarle Moen**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

# THE THIEF

The norwegian hotel [THE THIEF](#) rated as number 1 in northern Europe by Condé Nast Traveler readers. [Read more here.](#)

**Q:** What does a day at work consist of for you?

**A:** The most important thing I do every day is to take the pulse of the hotel. I speak with guest and employees to get a feel for their needs, before the needs arise and give support where needed. I'm no use for anybody just if I just sit inside an office. I need to be where things happen.

**Q:** What's the best part of your job?

**A:** It's of course all the interactions with my guests and co-workers, and to be able to help improve the hotel experience for all our visitors. I'm also Chairman of the Board for the Norwegian Hospitality Association (NHO Reiseliv) and passionate about putting the region on the world map. Working at THE THIEF definitely allows me to do just that.

**Q:** Do you have anyone you've looked up to?

**A:** As I've also said earlier, Petter and Torgeir set the standard for the Nordic Choice system. And one of the things they're great at is letting others shine. I learn from my co-workers at THE THIEF every single day.

**Q:** Do you have any nice traditions at your office?

**A:** Traditions build company culture. To me the most important traditions are the ones where we lift each other up. In addition to prizes like "employee of the month" and "employee of the year", I'm proud of all the spontaneous celebrations of small and large wins and accomplishments. Co-workers that go that extra mile for guests and other colleagues are noticed.

**Q:** How long have you been a member of HSMIAI?

**A:** As long as I can remember.

**Q:** What do you think is the best thing about HSMIAI?

**A:** HSMIAI showcases role models, talents, new concepts and ideas. This contributes to making everyone in the industry try a little harder each day.

**Q:** Are there any activities or projects you think HSMIAI should start up?

**A:** Keep being a driving force behind the development of the industry. We members have much to learn from each other, especially across the borders. There is much inspiration in bringing the world into our hotel lobbies.

**Q:** Describe your perfect weekend.

**A:** The perfect weekend is either spent at the cabin in Drøbak or exploring a new hotel. I always take notes when I'm travelling, and try to capture the mood where I am. Everything is about getting the guests to feel good.

**Q:** If you were trapped on a desert island, what would you take with you, if you could choose one thing?

**A:** A fine bottle of wine. Then I'd use the label to write a travel letter and send it back home in the empty bottle.

**Q:** What is the title of the book about your life?

**A:** *Engaged, empathetic and a bit eccentric.*

**Q:** What is your next travel-destination?

**A:** I'll soon be going to Tulum in Mexico – a beautiful little corner of Mexico that has quietly evolved to become one of the world's hottest travel destinations. Laid-back mood, powder white beaches, exotic jungle and amazing Mayan ruins. I'm counting the days!

**Q:** Do you have any special hobbies?

**A:** Travelling and exercising. Both give me a great deal of new energy. And I need that.

**Q:** Thank you for your time. Do you have any personal comments?

**A:** I'd like to send a big thank you to all my fantastic colleagues at THE THIEF. You guys impress me every single day.

***Photo:** Jarle Moen, Chief Executive Officer at Oslo's THE THIEF hotel. Photographer: CW-Wesenberg/kolonihaven.no*

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## [HSMIAI Region Europe Profile: Terri Scriven from Google](#)

**Terri Scriven**  
**Head of Hospitality and Tourism**  
**Google UK**

**Terri is also the Vice Chair of HSMIAI Region Europe Digital Marketing Advisory Board.**

**Q:** What does a day at work consist of for you?

**A:** As the Head of Hospitality and Tourism for Google UK, my role is to partner with Hotels, accommodation providers and Tourist Boards to build their brands online and drive more traffic to their websites. No day ever remotely the same, which is what I love about the role.

I started this morning at 6am with a personal training session, which pushes me out of bed and past my breaking



point, also the only time I can do with a 3 year old. I then head into the office for a breakfast meeting with my Analytical Consultant, who is brilliant and is working on a new Direct Booking solution for search to link STR performance and Search demand so the hotels can optimise and push search to close occupancy gaps instead of discounting and allowing the OTAs to scoop up.

I then typically have 2 client meetings on key topics aligned to our joint business plans – today I am meeting with the VP of Marketing and Ecommerce at Hilton on their Direct Booking strategy and quest toward further automation, followed by a meeting with Hostelworld on their 2017 plan. I then have a little time to structure my speech for Next week's Hosesons conference as well as the 3 conferences I will speak at the following week at World Travel Market (it is conference season so I have nearly 1 event a week).

Yet last week was very different as I facilitated Stretch, a Women's Leadership course we run and had time in Dublin with the team.

I race home at 5:45 to make it back in time to do 'fun time bath time' with my daughter and read her two stories before bed. Then a quick dinner before I clear the inbox and wind down with my husband.

**Q:** What's the best part of your job?

**A:** The people and the continuous challenge. We are constantly testing and iterating our product to improve the consumer experience but also the performance for advertisers. At first it felt like drinking through a firehose, but now I love the state of being uncomfortably excited, on the edge of my seat and working to constantly learn and develop myself and the team.

**Q:** Do you have anyone you've looked up to?

**A:** I am lucky to have many senior role models at Google, who inspire me to push myself outside of my comfort zone, be intentional with my career. Eileen Naughton who was the UK MD has just started a role as the Head of people and HR for Google – she optimises what it means to be a good coach and has instilled coaching fundamentals in all I do with my team. Sheryl Sandberg truly inspires me with her boldness to author ‘Lean In’ and inspire a following to do the same. We teach much of what she recommends in ‘Stretch’ and more and I feel more confident myself as I progress through my career.

**Q:** Do you have any nice traditions at your office?

**A:** I love the TGIF tradition which was originally started by Larry and Sergey on a Friday afternoon as a meeting to update teams on the latest product developments over a beer. Google is now 18 and it continues weekly to this day (only now on a Thursday to be broadcast as a catch up on Friday with our Global time zones) with Sundar, Larry and Sergey leading on key topics and the latest product developments.

**Q:** How long have you been a member of HSMIAI?

**A:** For the last 2 years.

**Q:** What do you think is the best thing about HSMIAI?

**A:** The education and networking opportunities to ensure hotels and hospitality companies can learn from each other and stay competitive in this increasingly changing landscape.

**Q:** Are there any activities or projects you think HSMIAI should start up?

**A:** I love HSMIAI Region Europe’s new mentoring programme and think we can extend this to virtual mentoring via Skype or hangouts with a larger Base.

I think HSMIAI Region Europe should partner with a leading Hotel University and line up internship and buddies to get our

future recruits off to the best start and inspire them on Digital Marketing career potential.

**Q:** Describe your perfect weekend.

**A:** This last weekend was pretty perfect. Ballet for my daughter on a Saturday morning, trip to the farmers market and dinner party with friends. Then on the Sunday I met a friend in town from NYC for brunch, took my daughter to the zoo and had a late afternoon picnic in Regents Park.

**Q:** If you were trapped on a desert island, what would you take with you, if you could choose one thing?

**A:** Helicopter.

**Q:** What is the title of the book about your life?

**A:** Stop running, Start Transforming

**Q:** What is your next travel-destination?

**A:** We just got back from an amazing holiday in Mauritius. True Paradise. After WTM I am heading to LA for Phocuswright and to Mountain View for an Executive Summit with Premier Inn.

**Q:** Do you have any special hobbies?

**A:** I wish I had time for hobbies, other than my love for Travel. We are very much focused on house renovation at the moment and have knocked down the kitchen to build an extension...so my hobby is currently all about the design, build and interior fit out.

**Q:** Thank you for your time. Do you have any personal comments?

**A:** HSMAI in Europe has such promise and becomes more professional and impactful each week. I have enjoyed being a member of the Digital Marketing Advisory Board and look forward to helping to take it to new heights.

*Top photo: Terri Scriven, Head of Hospitality and Tourism, Google UK*

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## **HSMAI Region Europe Profile:** **Tomi Meriläinen**

**Tomi Meriläinen**  
**General Manager**  
**Radisson Blu Scandinavia Hotel Oslo**

**Q:** What does a day at work consist of for you?

**A:** Supporting my management team in their work, following up on-going projects, walking around and talking to both guest and staff, following up on performance and looking into the future. In a large hotel there is a lot going on and every day is different. Some days are more desk based and the others are filled in with meetings and conversations over the phone or Skype.

**Q:** What's the best part of your job?

**A:** Versatility of tasks. There are many areas to handle and my focus is shifting depending on the situation and needs. Particularly I enjoy developing the way things are done and coming up with new ideas to be implemented.

**Q:** Do you have anyone you've looked up to?

**A:** I have had the pleasure to work with people from different backgrounds and nationalities and there have been many people that have inspired me. I believe there is something to learn

from everyone and would not state just a name or two. I look up to everyone that has the courage to live their life to the fullest without regret and fear.

**Q:** Do you have any nice traditions at your office?

**A:** "Julegrøt" which I am very much looking forward to this year.

**Q:** What do you think is the best thing about HSMIAI?

**A:** Bringing professionals together.

**Q:** Are there any activities or projects you think HSMIAI should start up?

**A:** Too early to say, being new to the organisation.

**Q:** Describe your perfect weekend.

**A:** Good sleep, morning yoga, sunshine, meeting friends and enjoying life. Nothing beats a weekend boat ride on the Oslo Fjord in the summer.

**Q:** If you were trapped on a desert island, what would you take with you, if you could choose one thing?

**A:** An endless container of drinking water. The first thing to do in the morning is drink water.

**Q:** What is the title of the book about your life?

**A:** *There and back again.*

**Q:** What is your next travel-destination?

**A:** Somewhere in the Norwegian mountains. I am looking forward to a lot of skiing the upcoming winter.

**Q:** Do you have any special hobbies?

**A:** I am very curious person and tend to get easily excited

about new things. Sports is a crucial part of my daily routine and can hardly be a day without any exercise. I do enjoy the outdoor exercise facilities around Oslo. I guess this does not count for anything special though.

**Q:** Thank you for your time. Do you have any personal comments?

**A:** It's good to be in Norway and looking very much forward to enjoying the local outdoors oriented way of life.