Category Descriptions & Entry Criteria

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LUXURY HOTEL OF THE YEAR

The Chambers English Dictionary defines luxury as an “abundant provision of means of comfort, ease and pleasure”; of “indulgence” and “anything delightful, often expensive”. This award celebrates all 5* hotels which offer a consistently exceptional environment with comprehensive facilities, unique and diverse features, excellent service and a superlative guest experience.

Initial Statement
What is your definition of a "Luxury Hotel" and why should you win this award?  

Establishment Overview
Detail your date of opening; room numbers, composition and pricing; internal and external layout; the number and capacity of main features and facilities (e.g. restaurants, gyms, spas, recreation or outdoor facilities etc.)

Facilities
Provide more detail on the key facilities and features that make your hotel distinctive and set it apart from your competitors in this market category. Include a description of up to five that you think best reflect your hotel, including at least one F&B offering.

Visual Identity
Describe the overall design philosophy / themes, standout features and ambiance of your establishment's architecture, landscape and interior design. Please note the Developer, Architect and Interior Designer.

Staff & Service
How would you define your service standards / character and the guest experience that you are aiming to achieve? Describe the number of staff in key functions including front desk; housekeeping, kitchen / waiting staff; procurement / purchasing and management. What training and development opportunities do your staff enjoy?

BOUTIQUE HOTEL OF THE YEAR

The founder of the boutique hotel sector Ian Schrager recently defined the concept as “nothing to do with size, it has to do with having a single focus, an attitude, product distinction, creating an elevated experience. It’s not trying to be a generic commodity to satisfy all people. There’s a singular focus.” This category is open to any design-centric, stylish hotel which creates a unique and striking impression through its decor, service and atmosphere.

Initial Statement
What is your definition of a "Boutique Hotel" and why is yours worthy of being understood as the best in the region over the last year?

Establishment Overview
Detail your date of opening; room numbers, composition and pricing; internal and external layout; the number and capacity of main features and facilities (e.g. restaurants, gyms, spas, recreation or outdoor facilities etc.)

Facilities
Provide more detail on the key facilities and features that make your hotel distinctive and set it apart from your competitors in this market category. Include a description of up to five that you think best reflect your hotel, including at least one F&B offering.

Visual Identity
Describe the overall design philosophy / themes, standout features and ambiance of your establishment's architecture, landscape and interior design. Please note the Developer, Architect and Interior Designer.

Staff & Service
How would you define your service standards / character and the guest experience that you are aiming to achieve? Describe the number of staff in key functions including front desk; housekeeping, kitchen / waiting staff; procurement / purchasing and management. What training and development opportunities do your staff enjoy?
MID-MARKET HOTEL OF THE YEAR

Industry commentators expect that the GCC hotel market will continue to see a significant trend towards high quality and well appointed, yet more affordable 3*4* hotels. Successful examples are already winning business from discerning but more cost-conscious travellers to the region, with design, technology, branding, service, facilities and value all important differentiators. This award is open to distinctive and successful hotels in this section of the market.

Initial Statement
What is your definition of a “MidMarket Hotel” and why is yours worthy of being understood as the best in the region over the last year?

Establishment Overview
Detail your date of opening; room numbers, composition and pricing; internal and external layout; the number and capacity of main features and facilities (e.g. restaurants, gyms, spas, recreation or outdoor facilities etc.)

Facilities
Provide more detail on the key facilities and features that make your hotel distinctive and set it apart from your competitors in this market category. Include a description of up to five that you think best reflect your hotel, including at least one F&B offering.

Visual Identity
Describe the overall design philosophy / themes, standout features and ambiance of your establishment’s architecture, landscape and interior design. Please note the Developer, Architect and Interior Designer.

Staff & Service
How would you define your service standards / character and the guest experience that you are aiming to achieve? Describe the number of staff in key functions including front desk; housekeeping; kitchen; waiting staff; procurement; purchasing and management. What training and development opportunities do your staff enjoy?

HOTEL LAUNCH OF THE YEAR

This award celebrates the most successful launch and operation of a hotel or resort in the 3*, 4* or 5* categories that has opened since the 1st of July 2016. Judged within the context of its market positioning, the award will reward leading business performance, design, services and value.

Initial Statement
Why is your hotel’s launch worthy of being understood as the best in the region over the last year?

Establishment Overview
Detail your date of opening; room numbers, composition and pricing; internal and external layout; the number and capacity of main features and facilities (e.g. restaurants, gyms, spas, recreation or outdoor facilities etc.)

Facilities
Provide more detail on the key facilities and features that make your hotel distinctive and set it apart from your competitors in this market category. Include a description of up to five that you think best reflect your hotel, including at least one F&B offering.

Visual Identity
Describe the overall design philosophy / themes, standout features and ambiance of your establishment’s architecture, landscape and interior design. Please note the Developer, Architect and Interior Designer.

Staff & Service
How would you define your service standards / character and the guest experience that you are aiming to achieve? Describe the number of staff in key functions including front desk; housekeeping; kitchen; waiting staff; procurement; purchasing and management. What training and development opportunities do your staff enjoy?
MOST IMPRESSIVE HOTEL FEATURE

This award recognises a conspicuous and impactful single feature of a hotel or resort that creates significant excitement and interest for guests and helps define an overall sense of the venue's identity. Such features can take many forms: entrants can include - but are not limited to - entrance areas, lobbies, sculpture, fountains, swimming pools or other water features, theatres or sophisticated lighting displays.

Description

Provide an overview of your establishment’s most impressive feature, and why it is worthy of being understood as the best of its kind in the region over the last year.

Visual Identity

Describe the overall aesthetic and / or design philosophy / theme of the feature as well as the ambiance / impact that it creates. Please also note the details of the main designer(s) of the feature and reference to any press, awards or accolades that it has received.

BEST HOTEL DEVELOPER

This award recognises a company for the actual / projected “cradle to grave” performance of their existing regional hospitality portfolio as well as their overall strategic vision and future development plans for the next 3 years.

Initial Statement

Provide an explanation of why you think that your organisation is worthy of being understood as the best hotel developer in the region over the last year.

Company Overview

Detail your organisation's year of founding, ownership structure, staff numbers, locations and overall mission statement / brand values.

Property Portfolio

Provide an overview of your regional hospitality portfolio, providing particular detail on your flagship property (name, location, function, scale, performance).

Financial Performance & Stability

Describe your organisation's overall business performance over the last year and how this relates to the previous one, with reference to the performance of your key hospitality developments in the region, your view of current market conditions and your strategy to adapt to them.

Sustainability & Innovation

How does your organisation encourage innovation, and how do you incorporate sustainable practices / technology / materials into your developments?

RESORT OF THE YEAR

This award is open to any resort hotel in operation for at least one year. Successful entrants will typically be self-contained environments located outside of urban areas that are able to provide for all of their clients' needs whilst they remain on the premises. Amenities will include, but are not limited to lodging, food, drink, entertainment and recreation. Resort hotels will also typically feature at least one signature amenity or characteristic.

Initial Statement

What is your definition of a "Resort Hotel" and why is yours worthy of being understood as the best in the region over the last year?

Establishment Overview

Detail your date of opening; room numbers, composition and pricing; internal and external layout; the number and capacity of main features and facilities (e.g. restaurants, gyms, spas, recreation or outdoor facilities etc.)

Facilities

Word limit: 300 • Image limit: 5
Provide more detail on the key facilities and features that make your hotel distinctive and set it apart from your competitors in this market category. Include a description of up to five that you think best reflect your hotel, including at least one F&B offering.

**Visual Identity**
Describe the overall design philosophy / themes, standout features and ambiance of your establishment’s architecture, landscape and interior design. Please note the Developer, Architect and Interior Designer.

**Staff & Service**
How would you define your service standards / character and the guest experience that you are aiming to achieve? Describe the number of staff in key functions including front desk, housekeeping, kitchen / waiting staff, procurement / purchasing and management. What training and development opportunities do your staff enjoy?

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**RISING STAR AWARD**
This special award is open to young professionals who have worked in the hospitality profession for one year or more and demonstrate exceptional work, passion, commitment and a desire to learn and progress in their chosen field. Candidates will typically be nominated by a colleague, manager or mentor although they can nominate themselves if the application is accompanied by an endorsement letter from an appropriate referee. This letter can also list quotations from colleagues or clients to help build a vivid and faithful picture of the candidate’s qualities for the judging panel.

**Current Role & Career Progression To Date**
Provide a summary of the individual’s age, career to date, qualifications and also upload a portrait photograph of them at least 300 dpi in jpeg, tif or png format (this will be used for promotional purposes should the candidate be shortlisted as a finalist).

**Professional Achievements / Results**
Detail the individual’s professional achievements / results to date and how they make this individual stand out from their peers.

**Initiative & Passion**
Explain how this individual demonstrates their initiative and passion, supported by specific examples and/or testimonials.

**Positive Impact on Colleagues**
Explain how this individual makes a positive impact on their colleagues, supported by specific examples and/or testimonials.

**Leadership Qualities / Potential**
Explain how this individual demonstrates their leadership qualities and potential, supported by specific examples and/or testimonials.

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**BEST BAR / NIGHTLIFE VENUE**
Character, atmosphere, entertainment, service standards, branding, design, food and beverage quality, effective promotions and a strong value proposition will all be key considerations in assessing the best bar / nightlife venue in operation over the last year. Successful applicants will be venues which are within or connected to hotels or other licensed sites and present a distinctive and popular offering which stands out in an often crowded and noisy marketplace.

**Initial Statement**
Provide an explanation of why you think that your venue is worthy of being understood as the best bar / nightlife venue in the region over the last year.

**Establishment Overview**
Detail your name, location, brand, date of opening, operational hours, venue capacity, staff numbers and overall business performance since the 1st of July 2016.

**F&B Offering**
Describe the nature and merits of your food and beverage offering including reference to style / theme, price point, value and quality.
### BEST GYM / SPORTING FACILITY

This category recognises gyms or sporting facilities situated within hotels that provide outstanding fitness opportunities to guests through the quality of their equipment, event / training programmes, customer service, identity / branding and value.

#### Initial Statement

Provide an explanation of why you think that your venue is worthy of being understood as the best gym / sporting facility in the region over the last year.

#### Establishment Overview

Detail your name, location, brand, date of opening, operational hours, venue capacity, staff numbers and overall business performance since the 1st of July 2016.

#### Equipment / Features

What equipment does your facility have? What other facilities or features makes your gym distinctive and sets it apart from your competitors in this market category?

#### Brand Identity, Promotion & Retention

Describe the overall branding / identity of your gym. Detail your marketing strategy and promotions and their success in winning and retaining customers.

#### Staff & Service

How would you define your service standards / character and the guest experience that you are aiming to achieve? What training and development opportunities do your staff enjoy?

### BEST SPA / WELLNESS CENTRE

This applies to any spa or wellness centre which is built and operating within the premises of a hotel that demonstrates consistently high standards of service, quality and value. Successful applicants will provide a distinct, therapeutic environment with a clear and compelling identity, well trained and skilled staff, excellent customer service and an extensive selection of treatments, packages and products.

#### Initial Statement

Provide an explanation of why you think that your venue is worthy of being understood as the best spa / wellness centre in the region over the last year.

#### Establishment Overview

Detail your name, location, brand, date of opening, operational hours, venue capacity, staff numbers and overall business performance since the 1st of July 2016.

#### Treatments, Packages & Products

Detail highlights of the menu of treatments and packages that you provide, and the distinctive products that you sell.

#### Theme & Visual Identity

Describe the overall aesthetic / design theme(s) of the venue and how its layout, furniture, fittings and equipment relate to the brand and contribute to the overall ambiance.
### BEST USE OF TECHNOLOGY

This award recognises hotels and resorts at either the single site or group level that have implemented a single example of information, engineering or equipment technology that has increased the efficiency of front or back office operations, created additional convenience or value for guests and/or had a positive impact on sustainability.

**Initial Statement**

Provide an explanation of the nature and importance of your technology implementation and why this solution is worthy of being understood as the best in the region over the last year.

**Project Design**

Detail the overall project timeline, key stages and team involved. What was particularly efficient or innovative about the technology or project design?

**Project Challenges**

What challenges did you face during the project, and how did you overcome them?

**Project Impact**

Describe the guest experience / services and/or back/front office operational efficiency improvements created by the project.

**Return on Investment**

How does the technology impact on the commercial viability of the facility? How is its economic value assessed and what is the actual / expected return on this implementation?

### BEST NEW RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR

This award celebrates the most successful launch and operation of a restaurant that has opened and been in operation since the 1st of July 2016. Open to all cuisines and price points and judged within the context of its market positioning, the award will celebrate business performance, design, originality and above all else, excellence in service standards and food and beverage offerings.

**Initial Statement**

Provide an explanation of why you think that your restaurant is worthy of being understood as the best new launch in the region over the last year.

**Establishment Overview**

Detail your name, location, brand, date of opening, operational hours, venue capacity, staff numbers and overall business performance since the 1st of July 2016.

**F&B Offering**

Describe the nature and merits of your food and beverage offering including reference to style / theme, pricepoint, value and quality.

**Theme & Visual Identity**

Describe the overall aesthetic / design theme(s) of the restaurant and how its layout, furniture, fittings and equipment relate to the brand and contribute to the overall ambiance.

**Staff & Service**

How would you define your service standards / character and the diner experience that you are aiming to achieve? Describe the number of staff in key functions. What training and development opportunities do your staff enjoy?
BEST EVENT VENUE

Whether accommodating weddings, corporate meetings or conferences, art exhibitions, award ceremonies, music concerts or banquets, this award will focus on hotels or resorts which provide an excellent service, facilities, layout, design and setting for one-off special events.

Initial Statement
Provide an explanation of why you think that your venue is worthy of being understood as the best event venue in the region over the last year.

Establishment Overview
Detail your name, location, brand, date of opening, operational hours, venue capacity, staff numbers and overall business performance since the 1st of July 2016.

Theme & Visual Identity
Describe the overall aesthetic / design theme(s) of the space / facility and how its layout, furniture, fittings and equipment can accommodate different events, relate to the brand and contribute to the overall venue's ambiance.

Case-Study
Describe up to three examples of particularly successful events that have been held at your venue since the 1st of July 2016 and why you feel that they demonstrate your venue’s quality and capabilities.

Staff & Service
How would you define your service standards / character and the diner experience that you are aiming to achieve? Describe the number of staff in key functions. What training and development opportunities do your staff enjoy?

BEST TEAM OF THE YEAR

Great hotels are only as good as their people. This award is open to any team that have excelled over the last year, whether in consistent back office or front office functions ranging from procurement to housekeeping, or a special purpose team brought together for a specific project initiative initiated and completed over the last 12 months.

Initial Statement
Provide an explanation of why you think that this team is worthy of being understood as the best in the region over the last year.

Team Composition
Word limit: 300  •  Image limit: 1
Explain the team’s function, structure and objectives, including specific mention of its leadership and key individuals. Please also upload a group photograph of them at least 300 dpi in jpeg, tif or png format (this will be used for promotional purposes should the team be shortlisted as finalists).

Team Achievements
Word limit: 300
Explain the team’s core purpose / objectives / targets, the KPIs used to measure these and evidence of how the team has achieved or exceeded them.

Team Initiative
Word limit: 300  •  Image limit: 2
Provide a case study or example of a specific initiative, innovation and / or improvement that the team is responsible for that has delivered great results.

Landmark Achievement
Word limit: 300  •  Image limit: 2
What was the team’s most important single achievement over the last year and why?
HEAD CHEF OF THE YEAR

A working head chef in the GCC who is creating exceptional food in any cuisine or style and who serves as an inspirational example to other kitchen professionals. Eligible chefs must have been running a service within their restaurant since the 1st of July 2016 and since this time, displayed impressive talent, flair, consistency and leadership.

Initial Statement
Provide an explanation of why you think that this chef is worthy of being understood as the best in the region over the last year.

Word limit: 300

Resume & Training
Provide details of the chef's resume, training, qualifications and any awards or accolades that they have previously received. Please also upload a portrait photograph of them at least 300 dpi in jpeg, tif or png format (this will be used for promotional purposes should the candidate be shortlisted as a finalist).

Word limit: 300 • Image limit: 1

Establishment Overview
Detail the name, location, brand, date of opening, operational hours, venue capacity, staff numbers and overall business performance of your restaurant since the 1st of July 2016.

Word limit: 300 • Image limit: 4

Cuisine
Describe the key principles and qualities of your current cuisine, any distinctive or refined technical elements in your approach, your ingredient sourcing strategy and your approach to ensuring consistent standards.

Word limit: 300 • Image limit: 5

Training & Leadership
Explain your view on the importance of training and leadership in your position. What such opportunities do your kitchen team enjoy? Have any of your team gone on to significant stages in other well-known kitchens? Please provide up to three examples.

Word limit: 300

HOSPITALITY LEADER OF THE YEAR

Open to senior hospitality professionals who have been in post since the 1st of July 2016, this award recognises GMs or Heads of Department who have demonstrated exceptional business performance, initiative and leadership qualities over this period, enhancing or transforming the operation and reputation of their brand.

Initial Statement
Provide an explanation of why you think that the candidate is worthy of being understood as the best hospitality leader in the region over the last year. Please describe the overall vision for the property / department as well as the service standards / character and the client experience that are being achieved.

Word limit: 300

Resume & Training
Provide details of the candidate's resume, training, qualifications and any awards or accolades that they have previously received. Please also upload a portrait photograph of them at least 300 dpi in jpeg, tif or png format (this will be used for promotional purposes should the candidate be shortlisted as a finalist).

Word limit: 300 • Image limit: 1

Establishment Overview
Detail the name, location, brand, date of opening, operational hours, venue capacity, staff numbers and overall business performance of your hotel / department since the 1st of July 2016.

Word limit: 300 • Image limit: 4

Impact
What measurable impact has the candidate had on their hotel(s) or department's profitability, efficiency and service quality? Please use specific figures and KPIs where possible, e.g. occupancy rates, RevPAR, verified survey results etc.

Word limit: 300

Landmark Achievement
What was the candidate's most important single achievement over the last year and why?

Word limit: 300
ENTRY GUIDANCE

Why Enter the Awards?

Peer Review & Recognition
All entries are subject to a detailed process of evaluation and analysis by a panel of distinguished industry experts. Winners are then crowned as examples of innovation and excellence in their category at the ceremony. Whether you’re an established player or a new market entrant, entering the Middle East Hospitality Awards will provide you with exposure to the sector’s leadership, where success relies on the quality of your work alone.

Benchmark & Promote Excellence
We work in a dynamic, competitive industry in a fast-paced and demanding part of the world. Although the Middle East Hospitality Awards entry process has been deliberately made as simple as possible to properly articulate your achievements, preparing your submission will provide you with a valuable opportunity to reconsider and reevaluate your recent work and compare it against your competitors.

Gain Widespread Promotion of Your Work & Company
Finalists and winners will benefit from an enormous volume of communication and engagement with the market in the run up to the event:

Important Dates

• The deadline for entries is Friday the 14th of July, which will not be extended. We therefore encourage all potential entrants to submit their entries as soon as possible, and contact us with any questions or queries on awards@thehotelshow.com.
• The award shortlist will be published in the week commencing Sunday the 11th of August.
• The award ceremony takes place on the second night of The Hotel Show, Tuesday the 19th of September from 7pm onwards at The Palazzo Versace Hotel Dubai.

Entry Fees

• Each entry into each category costs $150.
• Your entry will not become valid and enter the shortlisting/judging process until the entry fee has been received by the organisers.
• Shortlisted entries will receive one free VIP ticket to attend the award ceremony. Entries that are not shortlisted do not receive a complementary ticket to the ceremony, although are welcome to purchase them.

Rules

• The judges’ decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into regarding either the shortlisting or the choice of winners.
• No employee of DMG or their families can enter.
• Awards sponsors cannot enter the category they are sponsoring and judges cannot mark categories that their companies have entered.
• The winners and finalists can state in marketing material that they are a previous finalist or a winner, but must make it clear which category and the year this was in.
• Supporting documentation or promotional materials sent in addition to your entry will be disregarded.
Eligibility & Confidentiality

- The awards are open to all hospitality establishments or staff based in the GCC. For further detail on each award, please refer to the category description and entry criteria above.
- The timeframe for all awards is from the 1st of July 2016 to date. Your establishment must have been open – or you must have been in your current post – since this date for the relevant category.
- All entries and voting results are kept confidential and will not be shared with the other entrants or any third party.

How To Submit Your Entry

- All entries must be submitted in English.
- You can enter as many categories as you like.
- Your entry must be completed on the event website: www.thehotelshow.com/awards, adhering to the word and image requirements detailed both there and on this form. The website will begin accepting entries on Monday 15th of May.
- Your entry will be evaluated against the criteria set out during the online process and in the guidelines detailed in this document. Please pay careful attention to these, keeping your submission clear, factual and to the point, concisely addressing the questions that you are being asked to answer.
- Assertions should be backed up with convincing evidence. Use verifiable statistics and testimonials where possible.
- Please bear in mind that the judges are not interested in slick language or formatting but instead a clear and convincing description of the qualities and performance of your work against the criteria.
- Uploaded image files must contain single, rather than multiple images. These images may have a title superimposed upon them, but must not carry wording meant to extend the corresponding text entry.
- We recognise that static text and images do not fully describe the qualities, atmosphere and experience provided by many of the award categories. Therefore all entrants must agree to provide two complementary vouchers for each of the five judges to experience their relevant offering to inform their evaluation, e.g. a night's accommodation at a hotel, a standard treatment within a spa or a meal at a restaurant.

Judging Process

- An unbiased arbitrator will decide upon a shortlist of up to four finalists per award category.
- A panel of leading industry experts will then review shortlisted submissions, scoring them individually with the final winners being decided upon by group vote. Event sponsors are not included in the judging process. Judges will not review entries made by their own organisations or clients, or indeed any other body which may present a potential conflict of interest.

Contacts

- For queries regarding the opportunity to sponsor the awards, please contact: Ferni Itiola, Sponsorship Manager for the Hospitality Portfolio on +971 4 445 3794 / +971 50 463 6040 or ferniitiola@dmgeventsme.com.
- For queries regarding the entry process or criteria, or to book seats at the awards, please contact us on awards@thehotelshow.com.