

Press Release

10th February 2020

Cinnamon's innovative marketing initiatives recognized as a case study by Philip Kotler

World renowned marketing guru Philip Kotler released his new publication, *Asian Competitiveness: Marketing for competitiveness in the Age of Digital Consumers* and has included Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts as a case study in the hospitality sector. The book is collaboration with Hermawan Kartajaya, the co-founder of the Asia Marketing Federation, as well as Hooi Den Huan, an Associate Professor at the Nanyang Business School in Singapore's Nanyang Technological University. The publication cited examples of innovation by 36 leading enterprises in 18 countries in Asia of which Cinnamon Hotels & Resort is the only hospitality brand from Asia to be featured. Air Asia, Alibaba, Axiata, Banyan Tree and Hyundai are some of the other dynamic Asian brands to be featured in the book.

The book highlights Cinnamon's effective use of social media and its various creative digital initiatives that have led to the brand winning the hearts of digital travelers in the forever connected, mobile-first world of today. These included Travel Blogger Conference Asia (TBC Asia), Cinnamon Immersive Video, a specialized Online Travel Agent Training Module, and "Treasure Hunt" which was a familiarization drive planned for travel agents. In the book, Kotler recommends successful brand strategies back by innovation as a response to the growing dominance of various global hospitality brands. Sealing Cinnamon's place as a dynamic marketing brand, the book states the "unique experiences that the target audiences earned during the events promoting Sri Lanka and Cinnamon Hotels are expected to be spread through word of mouth, as well as online reviews and recommendation."

Elaborating on the Travel Blogger Conference Asia (TBC Asia) that took place earlier in the year, the book recognizes the fact that travel bloggers are major influencers in the tourism and hospitality industry by dint of sharing their journeys and experiences with aspiring travelers. Kotler also observed that Cinnamon's usage of innovative videos at the World Travel Mart in London, launch of a specialized online travel agent training module in 2015 which linked over 97,000 travel agents as well as its large e-learning library offering 200 educational programmes were all features that actively targeted tech-savvy travelers and online travel agents. Cinnamon being used as a case study for the global marketing stalwart's book is significant as Kotler chose to focus on brands considered to be disruptive across the continent, truthful, sincere, authentic, more socially and environmentally responsible, and believe and work towards their missions, visions and values. The book iterates that "in addition to building hotels and resorts at picturesque locations

and with excellent facilities, Cinnamon realizes the importance of providing an experience that suits customers' needs.”

Sharing his thoughts on the landmark feat of Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts being the only hospitality local brand to be given international prominence due to its success in the luxury market segment, Dileep Mudadeniya- Head of Brand Marketing and Vice President for John Keells Group, stated, “Significant efforts were made to build the most sought after and preferred leisure brand in the country. To have our success lauded in a global context and our brand strategy used as a case study is an honour, both for our brand and for Sri Lanka, as a whole. Our marketing strategy was developed based on unconventional and creative thinking to reach the relevant audience”.

World renowned Philip Kotler is a household name across the marketing sphere. His book Marketing Management remains one of the world's 50 best-selling guides for business of all time. The UK's Financial Times ranked him as one of its top 10 business thinkers. His contributions to marketing and business have earned him the well-deserved title “Father of Modern Marketing”.

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts is a chain at the forefront of Sri Lanka's luxury hospitality sector, comprising of 15 hotels and resorts located in key areas across Sri Lanka and the Maldives. The chain has evolved to become synonymous with inspired living, promising holistic experiences that cater to the interests and requisites of the quintessential traveler.