REVINATE HEROES

Hotel Industry Movers & Shakers

Ryan Gurfie

Operation & Quality Manager • Tauzia, Indonesia

What led Ryan Gurfie to a career in hospitality? "My heart belongs to the world of service," he explains. But that's not all. Ryan declares four key passions: working with people, sharing knowledge, constant learning and a dedication to service—all of which he's found in his hospitality career.

During his studies in Hotel Management at President University in Jababeka, Cikarang, Indonesia, Ryan began his management training at Jababeka Golf & Country Club. "I began as a kitchen helper because my natural shyness was a good fit for the back of the house," he recalls. After his stint in the kitchen, Ryan found an early home in human resources when he did his internship at Hotel Aryaduta Jakarta (previously managed by Hyatt). "It felt like a natural fit for me and I loved the world of surveys," he says. For his career debut, when offered a position abroad as an HR and Training Assistant for the soon to be opened Holiday Villa Hotel Doha in Qatar, Ryan was glad to accept.

The Holiday Villa Hotel Doha is a property widely patronized by international clientele.

Here Ryan was introduced to a new world of diverse cultures, interacting with folks from Europe, India and, of course, the Middle East. "The middleman role was challenging and fulfilling for me," Ryan remembers. It awakened his passion for working with people and sharing knowledge.

After living and working in Qatar, Ryan briefly moved back to Indonesia to take a position as a Training Manager for an exotic 300-room property, the Marbella Hotel, Convention & Spa located in Anyer (West Java). He then moved

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back to the Middle East to work as an HR Officer for the Beach Rotana, a five star beach side hotel in Abu Dhabi. Here, Ryan says that he recognized his passion for learning, as in this role he "never stopped learning" and loved it.

Eighteen months ago, Ryan became Operation Coordinator for Tauzia, a network of 45 hotels headquartered in Jakarta, the most populous city in Indonesia. In January of this year, he was promoted to Tauzia's Operation and Quality Manager. Ryan describes Tauzia as "the most hip, funky and relaxed working environment," but at first, he was rather daunted by the task at hand. He was asked to manage all the online reviews across the Tauzia network—a brand new role for Ryan and a big challenge, but one he is proud to have been offered. True to form, Ryan rose to the challenge and last year was awarded Tauzia's Rookie of the Year.

on Revinate to put his "passion and energy into helping each hotel in the Tauzia network to understand their reputations and those of their competitors."

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Being in a role dedicated to maintaining the quality of the guest experience was new to Ryan. But in his previous HR and training positions, he learned about marketing, handling complaints, standards of cleanliness, and building customer insight with survey data—experience that proved to be a perfect fit for his new role. "We believe we have to know our customer. We listen to them, learn what they love and what they don't like," he says.

Ryan's mornings are typically spent checking the more than 300 reviews posted overnight for Tauzia properties across dozens of different review sites. His first priority is to spot negative comments and inform the GM of the individual property that received the complaint so action can be taken. "The smallest fault will show up on TripAdvisor," Ryan warns.

Technology now plays a new role in Ryan's professional life. No stranger to technology, he's been relying on it for years to increase speed and maintain work efficiencies. Now, he relies

But it's not just vigilance in getting ahead of complaints before they spiral into decreased bookings that consumes Ryan. "Our GMs are

very happy with Revinate because they can get real data on what guests think of their service and their hotels. It's a mirror that helps them to see themselves clearly."

For Ryan, gazing into that mirror is where the job begins. The more important task at hand is "rolling all that insight back into the company to inform corporate strategy—making educated decisions and revising our operational and marketing strategies to reflect the needs of the customer."

When it comes to hotel reputation management, Ryan offers the following advice:

1. **The modern traveler is mobile dependent and expects on-demand, immediate, personalized, service.** They love to communicate with you and their social networks about the service they expect—and do or don't receive.

2. **Be vigilant — monitor, monitor, monitor.** Customers post reviews of their experiences whether hotels listen or not. Know at a glance where you stand.

3. **Prioritize feedback on a daily basis.** Keep your eyes and ears open so as not to be blindsided.

4. **Commit to standing toe-to-toe on quality of experience** with each of your competitors— monitor their reviews as well.

5. **Interact live with customers** through social media as much as possible.

6. **Imagine yourself as the guest** to get to the right level of service.

7. **Know about your guests' preferences** and how to deliver the right experience for them.

8. **Watch your tone when responding to online complaints.** Your tone of voice in social media represents the company.

9. **Be sincere and set expectations appropriately.** Online reviews force truthfulness. If you claim to deliver a five star experience and you don't, it will take a long time to recover from the bad reviews sure to follow.

When it comes to the source of his success, Ryan names, "Mom's blessing, God's grace, the so many people that have invested in me, a genuine love for helping others succeed, hard work, perseverance, and studying something every day."

Revinate Heroes is a series of articles profiling successful hoteliers who are moving the hospitality industry into the future.