

Reinvesting in Hotel Design

Doyle + Partners



D +
P

Foreword

With renewed sources of capital, hotel owners, operators and brands are investing again – seizing the opportunity to keep properties fresh and to stay competitive. Cautious optimism reigns and budgets remain tight, so properties must prioritise spending to maximise ROI. These are some of the updates hotels are (or should be) spending money on.

Restored consumer confidence and business spending are bringing capital back to the hotel market sooner than many anticipated. Global and Irish hotel revenue per available room (RevPAR) is on the rise.



Landmark Hotel Lobby – Ballyshannon
D + P Services: Architecture, Interior Design
Graphics/Branding, Furniture Design

Invest in Real Estate Development

Lower real estate prices and higher levels of inventory, especially distressed properties, means global hotel acquisitions are predicted to increase 15% to 20% to about \$30 billion in 2011 as real estate investors react to rising occupancy and room rates. The volume of deals is expected to rise the fastest in Europe, Middle East and Africa – an increase of as much as 25%. Adaptive reuse of non-traditional properties such as vacant office space also poses opportunities in growth markets.

Align Brand Positioning

Influenced by the economy and inspired by what many call the Responsibility Revolution, consumers' priorities have shifted, and brands face the necessity of re-aligning with more current consumer trends: authenticity, value, community and connection. In fact, 62% of global consumers would switch brands if a different brand of similar quality supported a good cause, as serving a purpose becomes a more significant part of the marketing mix than ever before.

Renovate Property

Renovation is required for many properties – whether due to new ownership, re-flagging, property improvement plans (PIPs) or simply age – and can be implemented all at once or in phases. Public lobbies are renovated to offer a more flexible, comfortable, living room lounge, while upgraded spaces like meeting and conference rooms offer opportunities for increased event revenue. Back-of-house renovations improve operational efficiencies and maximise the use of real estate. And guest room renovations enhance customer comfort and loyalty.

Adaptive reuse of buildings for new hotels

Adaptive reuse – the art and design science of reinventing buildings – occupies a small but powerful niche within the larger world of hotel development. It's powerful because it gives hoteliers a way into otherwise impenetrable urban centres.

It also gives them a road less travelled. Let's face it, turning a former office building (or warehouse or theatre) from the 1930s into a hotel demands not only creativity but an open mind. It demands that hoteliers "restart" their engines. By that, I mean redefining their expectations and their set of "givens" in a way that ground-up construction and/or renovation of existing hotel stock does not require. And did I mention the need for (really) over-the-top design thinking?

For instance, in an adaptive reuse project, a brand's standard roster of room types may need to be tweaked and expanded to respond to the existing building's physical constraints, which include structural columns, beams, elevator cores, existing stairs, loading docks, exterior windows and floor-to-floor heights. Traditional hotel space planning may need to be tossed, as well. Spaces may need to be rethought/reconfigured to fit the program elements into the existing architectural shell while simultaneously providing superb guest experiences and

operational efficiency. Same with the usual formula for performance. It may need to be revised to account for these planning and construction adjustments.

Is it right for both of you? First and foremost, you've got to figure out the most appropriate use for the building in question, a new life that will best take advantage of its bones and character. Not all fatigued (or otherwise ill at ease) office buildings make viable hotels. Consider what's best for the building first – and then whether you belong in its future.

Change management. Adaptive reuse means you, too, have to adapt. The building's not doing all of the changing. Columns, beams and elevator cores don't move nicely. Your vision can. You need to be creative with your space planning and the addition of room types to accommodate the restrictions dictated by the building. Challenges can turn into opportunities for creating something special.

Brand management. Although the existing building drives much of an adaptive reuse development, your brand should do the critical steering. Ultimately, the project should be a beautiful melding of the two. In the end, though, the interior design is what weaves the brand into the depths of the building. It's done with colour, materials, furniture and fixtures that marry building and brand.

Boost Sustainability

95% of business travellers believe the hospitality industry should be undertaking green initiatives, and 52% indicate a willingness to pay more for rooms that enable guests to reduce their carbon footprint. So green hotels increasingly attract conscientious consumers as well as corporate meeting planners with social responsibility standards to meet. Enhancements such as efficient lighting, low-flow water fixtures and solar equipment can greatly reduce operational costs without cuts to customer service.

Hospitality brands have made sustainable practices part of their brand and offering. Now health and wellness are in their sights. Wellness is more than access to a spa or fitness centre. It can mean guest rooms that encourage yoga, exercise, and meditation, for example, and design choices, toiletry selections, room-service menus, and mini-bar snacks that reflect a health consciousness.

Refresh Technology

Global consumers have become accustomed to instant – and constant – access to information everywhere they go, and hotel destinations are no different. Upgrading infrastructure in order to provide uninterrupted access has become imperative, with travellers indicating that wireless internet is the top "must have" amenity. Similarly, hotels are

Landmark Hotel Bar – Ballyshannon
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using tools like iPad concierge, room service apps, property management systems and social networking to improve communications both internally and externally.

Upgrade Food & Beverage

As chef-driven cuisine and cooking networks raise customer expectations, and as 71% of adults say they try to eat healthier when dining out, food trends such as locally sourced and sustainable ingredients, kids' nutrition, and gluten free diets resonate throughout the hospitality industry. Many diners increasingly choose unique establishments with local ties, and enhanced bar and lounge areas can increase foot traffic by their appeal to local residents as well as hotel guests.

Leisure as an Experience

Leisure today is all about experience. And while high-end hotels and resorts actively seek an affair of the heart with their clientele, brands at every price point have customer loyalty in mind. This has led a few of them to sell their hotels (often at record prices) and focus exclusively on delivering the quality of experience that their brands imply. Even as hospitality brands seek to differentiate themselves, their clientele is converging in interesting ways. The young influence their elders (think iPods and business casual), and the distinction between travel for business or pleasure is much less relevant. People increasingly want to combine the two.

Multitasking as a Lifestyle

Hotels are not just a place to sleep now, but also an integral part of a richer scene. This is why shopping and hotels are joined at the hip. Retail is often an element of new hotel development, while "lifestyle centres", street like outdoor malls are putting hotel rooms in with their existing mix of retail and restaurants. Add meeting venues and you have all the makings of a self-contained urban environment. The energy and activity it generates has become a key part of the hotel experience.

Letting people escape and unwind

Formality used to be the order of the day for business hotel dining and meeting spaces. No more. Business is conducted now in less formal settings, so hoteliers are shifting gears. "It's not just about making people comfortable they want to be able to escape. That means giving them places where they can really unwind. These are revenue generators, of course, but they're also redefining the hotel experience." In smaller hotels, the same idea might surface as a roof deck with a cool bar and a plunge pool, or a Zen garden terrace with a day spa attached. The bathtub is now a piece of furniture, Bathing is moving into the guest room proper, making the space feel larger and more interactive."

Bars and restaurants remain a hospitality mainstay, but with an emerging difference: trend-setting hoteliers are seeking out the unique. Wine bars and microbreweries are two ways that hotels are accentuating the local while providing a familiar service. There's a new

emphasis on providing an ambience that speaks to "location, location, location" while still channelling elements – and benefits – of the parent brand. The strategy makes the hotel a draw for locals, and their presence helps give it a cosmopolitan sense of being part of the area and its scene.

Travellers want to feel plugged-in, but they also want privacy and comfort. This has led to the rise of the VIP area – whether it's a cabana, a private club or dining room, or a cordoned-off space in a bar. For operators, it can be lucrative. Frequent business travellers will often spend more for the ability to mix urbanity with exclusivity. It's less about celebrity, though, and more about relaxing in the company of the so-called "kinetic elite." It's also another way for hotels to keep their best customers coming back.

Behind all of this is the increasing agglomeration of entertainment and hospitality. Las Vegas has been phenomenally successful in this, blending leisure activities and then creating synergy among them. Others in the leisure sector are taking notice. This doesn't mean we'll see Vegas-like entertainment everywhere, but it reveals the increasing fluidity between different kinds of leisure – as well as between work and leisure. The vibrant mix of uses that results make for lively places, and economically healthy ones, too. The long-term return on investment of traditional hotel rooms can be balanced by Retail's more immediate cash flow.

Hotel Lobby Design

Walking into a hotel lobby is like shaking the hand of someone you just met. It's all about the first impression. Just like people, hotel lobbies embody distinct personalities. A lobby can be aloof, inviting, intimidating, or unbelievably cool. As an hotelier, you cannot stand by your front door greeting all the guests that make their way onto your property, but you can choreograph initial experiences by transforming your lobby into an oasis.

The best lobbies create a refuge for the tourist, for the business traveller, for the couple enjoying a weekend getaway. Lobbies blend the best of form and function – they anticipate the needs of your guests and introduce your sense of style. Within moments of entering your hotel, guests brand your hotel as trendy, chic, cheap, or luxurious. They step into this public space immediately upon crossing the threshold – so, take this opportunity to make a powerful first impression on your guests.

In today's competitive hospitality industry, hoteliers constantly work to come up with elements that turn their next visitors into repeat guests. In especially tough economic times, travellers are tightening their budgets. In response, hoteliers need to identify smart solutions that keep guests booking stays.

Focus on what pleases your guests – create a special oasis

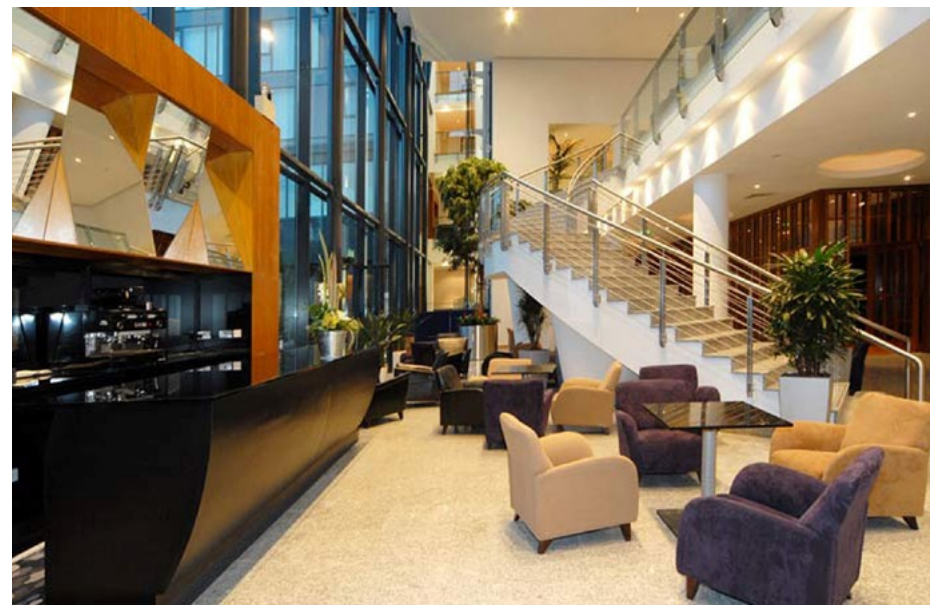
Analyse your potential guests: If you are going to create a lobby space that draws in new guests, it is essential to develop a good understanding of who your guests are. If your target demographic is a family on vacation, think about putting an ice cream stand or a play area in your lobby. If your target demographic is vacationing couples, consider a romantic lounge or fire within the space. Your goal is to delight your guest with a welcoming area they never knew they wanted - and can't imagine missing on their trip.

Create a unique environment: You want your property to stand out, to offer something different. The lobby is the perfect area to establish your hotel's personality. Make a statement, develop a particular style, and set the scene for your guests. Make your lobby more than a passageway from the outside world to their rooms. Create an environment that makes your guests want to stop, see, and do things. Give them thought-provoking or inspirational art to look at, mood-appropriate and well-designed lighting, and an environment that invites them to linger and relax.

Tie experience with function: Not only must your lobby house the traditional check-in desk, waiting area, and concierge stand, but it should serve as a social gathering place with auxiliary seating and tables. Develop a space specifically for business travellers that houses laptop ports, printers, and phones. Offer kiosks to check-in to flights. If space permits, section off another area for guests looking for somewhere to socialise with others. If possible, tie this space in with the hotel bar, and place chairs and tables in a configuration that invites your guests to mingle. Think beyond the traditional lobby, and even the simplest enhancements create added ambience.

Incorporate revenue streams: Create a lobby that provides a variety of shops and services. When guests conveniently enjoy amenities they want right in your lobby, you get one more chance to increase the revenue as well. Even a boutique property can serve coffee, stock a snack bar, and sell gifts or toiletries. Guests appreciate the convenience of in-house offerings and unexpected retail experiences, eliminating the need to shop elsewhere. Give them one more reason to stay in the hotel and experience every aspect it has to offer.

Analyse the layout and architecture: Take a close look at the structure of your lobby. Something too large may seem uninviting, while a small, cramped space discourages guests from lingering. Because lobbies are typically wide-open spaces, take advantage of the area and create zones that seamlessly flow together to create a cohesive experience. Each zone can serve a purpose and fulfil specific guest needs. Also, focus on the architecture of the space. Work to match the era of the hotel with the lobby and play with the style as you introduce furniture and accessories. A luxurious hotel begs for a lavish lobby. A family resort destination might feature child-size tables, chairs, and activities in the lobby. Tie these elements into the architectural style of the space.



Whites Hotel Lobby – Wexford

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Catching the Flavour

Many hotels aim to stand out by celebrating their roots in the community. Providing a backstory is part of this, especially for established properties. New ones trade on their cachet, with amenities that draw locals as well as visitors. Knowledge of the terrain and a reflected sense of place are differentiators that add to the guest experience. Creativity and authenticity always win points.

Health Is the New Green

Hospitality brands have made sustainable practices part of their brand and offering. Now health and wellness are in their sights. Wellness is more than access to a spa or fitness centre. It can mean guest rooms that encourage yoga, exercise, and meditation, for example, and design choices, toiletry selections, room-service menus, and mini-bar snacks that reflect a health consciousness.

Innovation Desired

With more competition in this sophisticated and rapidly maturing market, choice is up and prices are coming down. That's driving experimentation: new brands, new lifestyles, and new designs. At the high end, the focus is on creating something special and memorable—the kinds of settings that lead to return visits.



Meet the Team

Philip Doyle – Owner/ Director, Head of Design and Construction

We are a professional, friendly, close-knit team passionate about Retail, Hospitality and Office Design. We have complementary skills to bring a fully integrated package to our business clients.

Philip is founder and director of the practice with over 12 years experience. He has always been interested in design and construction. His father is a builder and he and his brothers used to work Saturdays and any holidays on construction sites all through school and college. This gave him a great understanding, from a young age, how a building is constructed. It also showed him how tough a building site can be on an icy winters morning. It instilled in him a passion for design and a wish to build projects and not just watch them being built by someone else.

A passionate sportsman Philip played hurling and football all his life and won a number of county titles for his club and an All-Ireland with his school. In the last few years he has taken up trail running and completed the 60k Mt Blanc (UMTB) race last year in France which was difficult but an amazing experience.

Some of our core values in the studio are; Thankfulness, Positivity, Hard Work, Happiness, Honesty, Success and a good work life balance. Life is too important to waste.

Eddie Phelan Architect /Partner MRIAI

Eddie graduated from Dublin School of Architecture DIT Bolton Street in 2006. Prior to setting up practice, Eddie worked for a design driven practice in Waterford City working on complex new build and conservation projects that were acclaimed both at a national and international level. Eddie has experience of delivering a wide range of high-quality projects from inception to completion, managing all aspects of the project process.

David Merrigan Architect /Partner

David is a graduate of Dublin School of Architecture, DIT Bolton Street. He has extensive experience in Civic, Local government, Commercial and large scale residential projects. David was the project architect for the recently completed French Embassy and Consulate on Merrion Square, Dublin. This particular project involved a number of high specification elements, high levels of confidentiality, a large and complex design team based in Ireland and France and an extremely tight, 14 month time period from inception to completion.

Cybele Fermino Senior Architect

Cybele is an architect with five years professional experience working on various commercial buildings including Hotel and Office design projects, she has extensive skill in: Autodesk Revit Architecture and BIM. A Brazilian, Cybele has been living in Ireland for three years and brings further international experience to Doyle & Partners.

Krzysztof Galaszewski Senior Architect MRIAI

Krzysztof is an architect with 15 years professional experience working on various commercial buildings including hotel, schools and office design projects. He has concentrated his efforts on projects requiring unique problem-solving skills with specialisation in workplace and retail sectors and was an early adapter of Building Information Modelling or BIM. With his advanced skills and understanding of BIM technology, Krzysztof has been able to augment the implementation of LEED design principles in an effort to optimise the energy efficiency of a given project beginning at the early stages of design.

Shane Kelly Senior Architectural Technologist & Designer

Shane Kelly is the technical principal for D + P office. He has more than 15 years' experience in project coordination and architectural design, as well as the administration of projects. Shane is responsible for initiating, developing and monitoring methods of technical design, technical content, quality assurance and construction phase services to ensure a holistic, consistent approach to the delivery of technical design services.

Shane Walsh
Senior
Architectural
Technologist

Shane Walsh is an Architectural Technologist with over 10 years experience. Since graduating he has gained valuable experience in a wide range of sectors – residential, commercial, educational, health, industrial and pharma. Like all Doyle and Partners employees Shane also brings international experience to the company having worked on major projects in Canada, Belgium and the U.K. Shane is a certified Revit user and BIM enthusiast who sees the benefit of collaboration between the entire design team.

Eoin Bennett
Architect

Eoin joined the firm after moving back to Ireland from Italy where he graduated from the Politecnico di Milano after completing his MSc. Architecture, having previously completed both; BSc. Arch. & BSc. Arch Tech at Waterford Institute of Technology. He is a very talented designer with a keen eye for detail and unique understanding of spatial design. Having worked on various retail, commercial, equestrian and residential projects, he's quickly built up a diverse understanding and background in architectural design.

Matthew Keating
Part 2
Architect

Matthew graduated from Waterford School of Architecture in 2015. He has worked for a large range of industrial commercial and residential projects from inception to completion. Matthew has specialist skills in Revit and BIM and is responsible for developing feasibility studies for large scale residential projects using this skillset. Matthew is an exceptionally talented designer with a keen eye for detail.

Services we Offer

Architecture

D + P design solutions result from a collaborative process that encourages our multidisciplinary teams to research alternatives, share knowledge and imagine new ways to solve the challenges of our built environment. Our architecture responds to the needs and aspirations of our clients and communities. We give form and meaning to rooms, buildings and landscapes – always balancing internal functions with external demands of site, climate and culture.

Interior Design

We design interior spaces that improve collaboration, inspire occupants and attract the best employees. The interior design teams study a client's business drivers and culture and create space that helps them flourish. Great interior space has extraordinary effects on our wellness and productivity. D + P's design solutions use space, colour, materials, energy and light as tools to create healthy environments that enhance performance.

Graphics + Branding

Great brands connect. It takes a thoughtfully designed strategy to develop communication programs and branded environments that define, inspire and engage consumers.

Brand Design Service Areas:

Strategic Brand Development

Visual Identity & Communications Design

Environmental & Experiential Design

LEED

LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is the most widely used green building rating system in the world. Available for virtually all building, community and home project types, LEED provides a framework to create healthy, highly efficient and cost-saving green buildings. LEED certification is a globally recognized symbol of sustainability achievement.

Adaptive Reuse Design Specialists

Adaptive Reuse—the art and design science of reinventing existing buildings — occupies a small but powerful niche within the larger world of commercial development. It's powerful because it gives clients a way into otherwise impenetrable urban centres.

New Service Available

Virtual Reality (VR)

We utilise virtual reality technology to explain the transformation of existing buildings and spaces to our clients and stakeholders. Creating immersive, three-dimensional, virtual models provides a time machine for our clients to travel to a hypothetical future version of their building.





JLR Marshalls, Waterford
D + P Services: Architecture
and Interior Design

Sources:
Gensler
Hotel Executive

At Doyle & Partners our client list includes:

FANAGANS



Colourtrend



AUTOBOLAND



Nolan Transport



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Doyle + Partners are a leading design and architecture firm specializing in small to medium retail, corporate and hospitality sectors. Our expertise is based on regular independent research into the retail, corporate and hospitality marketplace.

D + P are a young design company, characterized by an entrepreneurial spirit, true team-work across a number of areas of expertise and new ways of approaching conventional tasks. We have an informal work environment where camaraderie and collegial support are highly valued, where ambition, very high morale and dedication to being the innovators of our field unify the staff.

Our firm is characterized by creativity, high energy and a unifying team spirit. Additionally, we are dedicated to creating and maintaining a workplace where we want to be. We continuously work at becoming better and better at what we do. We are a company in growth and over the last three years, we have worked intensely on the professionalization of our business.

Our client list includes: Volvo, Colourtrend, BMW, Audi, Nolan Transport, NVD, Jaguar, Wright Group, AutoBoland and Fanagans.

www.doyleandpartners.ie