

HD Expo Breaks Attendance Records at 2014 Show

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The **Hospitality Design Exposition and Conference (HD Expo)** celebrated a landmark year in Las Vegas. Held May 14-16th for the second year at Mandalay Bay Convention Center, the show—the leader in design for the hospitality industry—marked a 15 percent jump in attendance from 2013 and remains the largest event in the industry.

With more than 900 exhibitors on the show floor, brands including Kohler, Durkan, Rohl, Tai Ping, Aceray, and more provided attendees a glimpse into the latest products and services changing the design world. This year, many chose to debut at HD Expo, including Ken Koneck, vice president of Meadow Lighting, a new division of JLF. “We believe this is the show to debut collections,” he says. “JLF rebranded this year and it is debuting at HD Expo in Las Vegas.” Complementing those who started anew, the show also saw the return of some devout exhibitors, including Jesse Kalisher of Kalisher, who explains: “We got our start at HD Expo seven years ago. This show and the entire team at the Hospitality Design Group have been instrumental in helping us build our business.”

In addition to the standout exhibitors, the show floor saw new additions including the Social Hub, the epicenter of the floor, designed by Morgans Hotel Group; and the Creativity Corner, a place for attendees to connect with their inner creative genius.

The show kicked off with a party on the eve of the first day, which was one of three unique networking opportunities for exhibitors and attendees of the show. The Opening Night Party at House of Blues and Party by the Pool, the most popular event at HD Expo, completed the signature events, which allow those in town to meet contacts both old and new, connect in a casual and fun environment, and discuss the latest happenings in the industry. Of the opportunity to connect, Steve Galbreath, vice president of RTKL states, “I’ve been coming to HD Expo for eight years now and I find the environment an easy place to meet potential clients and others in the industry.”

The standout panelists who graced the HD Expo stage during their respective conference sessions were some of the most superior to date. Michael Bedner, chairman of the board for Hirsch Bedner Associates, was the keynote address in conversation with Michael Adams of *Hospitality Design* magazine. Larry Traxler, senior vice president, global design services, Hilton Worldwide; Gary Dollens, senior vice president, finance and brand development, Hyatt Hotels & Resorts; Richard Senechal, executive vice president, facilities, Loews Hotels; and others participated in the signature Owners’ Roundtable event. Julie Frank, global director of design, Le Méridien Hotels; Sam Suleman, vice president, development and operations, Equinox Hotels; Michael Mina, chef/restaurateur, The Michael Mina Group; and Arash Azarbarzin, president, hotel group, SLS Hotels all participated in discussions ranging from the rise of Millennial hotel brands to the importance of chef-designer relationships.

“This year, it was clear that there is a revitalized excitement in the state of the industry. We saw our most significant attendance numbers to date and welcomed new and innovative exhibitors, as well as leading designers who are changing what we do,” says Liz Sommerville, group show director for the Hospitality Design Group. “This show was a clear indication that we are the preeminent destination to learn, connect and grow your business all under one roof.”

Next ahead for the group is **HD Americas**, taking place at the Miami Beach Convention Center, September 16-17th. The show, now in its second year, will carry on the same feel of HD Expo, but in a more intimate environment and will cater toward those working in the Latin America, Caribbean and South American markets. For images and information on HD Expo 2014, please **HD Magazine’s digital press kit**.