

NEWS

My Place, KAMP to develop 30 in Texas

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ABERDEEN, SD—After establishing itself in the Midwest and Northwest portions of the U.S., economy extended-stay brand My Place is digging its spurs into the state of Texas. A territorial agreement between the brand and Lone Star State-based KAMP Hotels calls for the development of 30 new hotels in 10 years.

“The story of our work in Texas started a few years ago, so it’s been a process of development,” said Ryan Rivett, president and COO of My Place Hotels of America, LLC. “With Texas being the largest state in the continental U.S. [by area] and having a lot of diversity in terms of economic demand generators and business-friendly



Terry Kline
My Place Hotels of America, LLC

communities, it is certainly an early priority for My Place development.

“Of the 25 hotels that are open, our largest concentration is in the Midwest and Northwest. As we continue to focus on national expansion, adding Texas and Oklahoma is a big accomplishment for the north-south continuity of our Midwest/

Central region. If you’re traveling across the country, you’re bound to see a My Place.”

KAMP Hotels is owned by the families of Texas lawyers Kevin Nelson and Alan Rhodes. The former is also a CPA and real estate broker who owns the historic Amarillo Building in Amarillo, TX, where both he and Rhodes are based. Hence, it was only natural that the first hotel to be developed and opened under the agreement was in that city.

“Alan and I both live in Amarillo and are very familiar with the city,” said Nelson. “As we’ve been getting to know the My Place team, we’ve been very impressed, and as we discussed opportunities, we felt that it would be wise for us to start at home. Let’s do this thing in a market that we’re very familiar with. We intend for the Amarillo hotel to be our flagship hotel. So, when people come to see us we can obviously walk them through our hotel; we can talk about its successes and we can talk about the lessons learned.”

My Place Hotel-Amarillo, TX, opened



ABOVE: Executives from KAMP Hotels cut the ribbon at the grand opening of My Place Hotel-Amarillo, TX.

in June; next up is nearby Lubbock, where both KAMP Hotels cofounders earned their undergraduate and law degrees, and then Ft. Worth.

“Lubbock is a different market than Amarillo, but it also is very similar,” said Nelson. “We felt like there would be some synergies having the two properties close by from a management perspective and from a construction and subcontractor perspective. With Fort Worth, we’ve now tapped into the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex where there’s a tremendous amount of opportunity with lots of submarkets.”

The Texas deal spawned from an original multi-property agreement between My Place and KAMP Hotels that also included hotels in neighboring Oklahoma and New Mexico.

“The multiple-property agreement that was established with KAMP Hotels was a stepping stone,” said Rivett. “Territorial development was a main topic in our early discussions with Kevin and Alan. All of us had an understanding of the potential for My Place in Texas, and we certainly had confidence in KAMP from the onset.

The multi-property agreement was the preamble and the opening of Amarillo, KAMP’s first property was the launch party for KAMP Hotels as My Place’s Texas representatives.”

Two hotels outside of Texas—in Albuquerque, NM, and Oklahoma City—have been incorporated in the agreement and are expected to be the next to open following the Texas trio. “The reason for that is they’re all tied together on Interstate 40, which is Historic Route 66, and it’s a very important cross-country, highly traveled road,” said Nelson. “Tying all those markets together was our intentional thought, and then we’ll have a solid core to build out as we develop the rest of the state.”

For his part, Rhodes expressed it was the My Place executive team—Rivett, his grandfather Ron (cofounder of both Super 8 and My Place) and Terry Kline, EVP of franchise development—who cemented his faith in the partnership.

“We are so impressed by the My Place plan and the My Place people, and that starts with Terry, Ryan and Ron, and the things

they’ve shown us and the opportunities they’ve presented us,” said Rhodes.

“Kevin and I are both farm boys and our fathers showed us the law of the farm—there’s a time to plan and then there’s a time to plant and to cultivate. But, our dads were both farming entrepreneurs, and the things that we learned as farm boys, we’re going to try to apply here as we go forward and in a very entrepreneurial way.”

Kline was equally impressed with the vision the KAMP group has for My Place

can also tell a story of the location that it’s assimilated itself to,” he added, noting, “I can see urban development in Texas adding another spin to that. There’s some beautiful architecture in downtown Fort Worth and a lot of really neat location-specific attributes to the state of Texas in places that I’ve traveled to.”

With a strong pipeline in place for the brand (“In the last couple of years that we’ve been selling franchises, we’ve seen a doubling in the number of properties open



My Place Hotel-Amarillo, TX, with its stars on each end of the building, is the brand's first Texas property.

in the territory, noting, “Kevin and Alan have worked over the last couple years to entrench themselves in the industry, and these two gentlemen coming together with the resources and the connections that they have throughout Texas with their vast backgrounds really sets the tone for now and for them being the vehicle that will accomplish the task over the 30 properties in the 10-year time-frame that’s been set forth in the agreement.”

While every property under the agreement is expected to follow the guidelines of the My Place 63- or 64-room prototypes, there will be something distinctly Texas about each one.

“On the Amarillo building, you’ll see the Texas stars on the architectural features on each end of the building,” said Rivett. “You’ll see a color scheme that’s very appropriate to the Southwest and to the more high-plains-desert type of ecosystem they have down there.

“In addition to that, every My Place hotel uniquely identifies itself by the artwork inside of the property. Each has locally generated artwork in the rooms and in the common areas so that the property, through its aesthetic features, can say, ‘Hey it’s My Place. Come stay with us.’ But, you

year-over-year, and we can now say that we’ll see that for 2016 and again for 2017,” noted Rivett), the Texas agreement with KAMP Hotels will be a major part of its future.

“We’re really working together with Alan and Kevin to have them be our facilitators in so many ways in that territory, such as the multiple locations that could come out of Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston or San Antonio,” said Kline. “You’ve got those large markets and then you’ve got a lot of coastal areas; you’ve got the greater Austin area with a lot of government; you’ve got the Mexico border communities; you have all kinds of opportunity. So, it will be really coming back and working together in a facilitating manner.”

Rivett noted, “If you think of the territorial agreement in terms of a train, KAMP Hotels is really the engine that is getting it started; that’s maintaining momentum; and that’s continually increasing momentum by developing properties and by growing relationships with networks of other hoteliers, developers and business people that may find the hotel business a good opportunity to get into.” HB