

UP-AND-COMERS



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MICAH GREEN

20-YEAR-OLD HOSPITALITY AND ROBOTICS ENTREPRENEUR BRINGS A FRESH PERSPECTIVE TO ISSUES IN HOTEL OPERATIONS

When discussing his company with potential clients or investors, CEO of hospitality robotics company Maidbot Micah Green is very aware of his young age. "I'm talking to people who have been in the hotel industry for decades, and some of them don't want to listen to a 20-year-old kid who—they assume—doesn't know what he's talking about," he says.

But Green has been entrenched in the lodging industry his entire life. His mother, Cindy Estis Green, founder and CEO of hospitality analytics company Kalibri Labs, in Green's words, "brainwashed him" into hospitality at an early age. After high school, Green enrolled in Cornell University's School of Hotel Administration. While doing a housekeeping rotation as part of his studies, Green started to think about innovating the long stagnant room cleaning process. Then it hit him—robotic assistants that would do the labor-intensive work so room attendants could focus more on tasks that require a human touch.

And so began Maidbot. Named "Rosie," after the Jetson's housekeeper, Maidbot's housekeeping robots clean guest room floors while room attendants take care of the rest. Based on intensive studies, use of Rosie cut room cleaning time by 10 to 20 percent and reduced incidents of housekeeping-related injury.

Rosie uses a powerful vacuum to clean all types of floors and each robot is packed with sensors that allow it to learn from its surroundings and collect data about every room it cleans. With all the data Rosie collects, Maidbot can communicate to the operations staff via a mobile dashboard if something needs attention, such as a spot on the carpet that's always dirtier than the rest of the room. "Data collection is great, but if it's not actionable, what's the point?" Green asks. "We're creating an intelligent system and a smart platform that gives everyone on your team a dashboard full of helpful information."

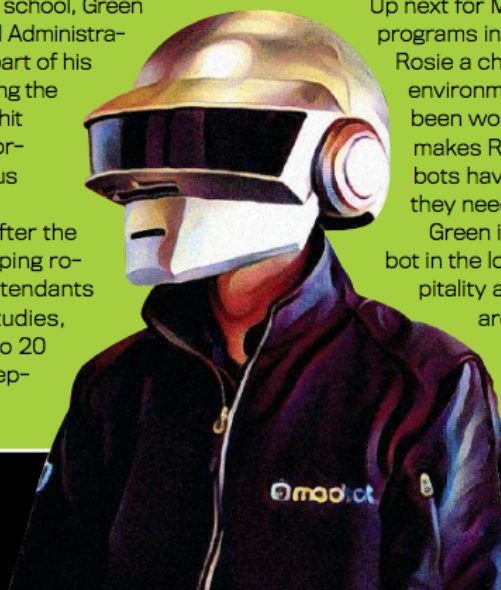
With such a forward-thinking product, the company is growing rapidly. "Just over a year ago, Maidbot was an idea scribbled on a napkin," Green says. "Now, we have nearly a dozen workable prototypes that are turning heads in the lodging market."

Green can't discuss it in detail, but major hotel companies are keeping a very close eye on what Maidbot is up to. "People get really excited about robots," he says with a laugh. "We're setting up business relationships and getting on authorized vendor lists. We're building the foundation for a long run in this industry."

Up next for Maidbot is a series of pilot programs in major hotels. These programs will give Rosie a chance to prove her worth in a real hotel environment. "In preparation for the pilots, we've been working on perfecting the software that makes Rosie autonomous," Green says. "These robots have the technology of a self-driving car, so they need to be extremely efficient and accurate."

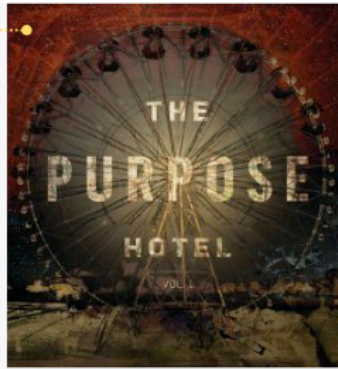
Green is excited to continue to developing Maidbot in the lodging industry. "Many people think of hospitality as slow to change, but so many hoteliers are innovators and are looking to be early adopters of technology that can really change our industry for the better. It's an amazing place to be." —*Kate Hughes*

JUST OVER A YEAR AGO, MAIDBOT WAS AN IDEA SCRIBBLED ON A NAPKIN



2 PURPOSE HOTEL

In September 2016, celebrity photographer Jeremy Cowart began a Kickstarter campaign to fund Purpose Hotel. The project has been gaining traction since and has far surpassed its initial goal. Every amenity supports humanitarian efforts. Even paying for faster internet service donates money to human trafficking victims. Each room sponsors a child's education.



3 RYAN RIVETT

Inspired by his grandfather's work with Super 8 Motels, Ryan Rivett, president and COO of My Place Hotels of America, has worked to develop an economy brand that can accommodate both short term and extended stay guests. "I challenge every component of my team to ask questions often, objectively and tenaciously. Innovation is stimulated not by having answers, but by asking questions," he says.



4 CHRIS LOEFFLER

Chris Loeffler, CEO of Caliber Hospitality, has strived to build a company that rehabilitates properties, better the local community, and creates jobs. He decided to fuel company growth and build client wealth using private, individual investor money instead of the more traditional financial institution funding and has developed an in-house strategy for all aspects of the investment cycle.



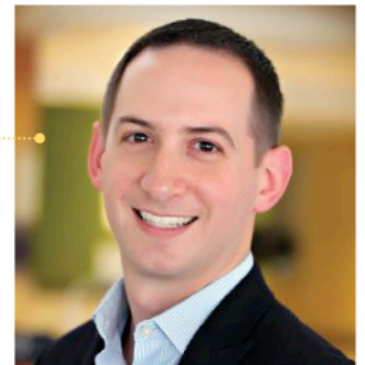
CATIE MANGELS

Within her first eight months as VP of acquisitions and development for Commune Hotels and Resorts, Catie Mangels signed two major deals. Now with more than a year with the company under her belt, Mangels continues to thrive. "For me, it's not just about getting a deal done—it's about partnering with our owners to create a one-of-a-kind experience for guests," she says.

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8 MARC POTASH

Now president and COO, Marc Potash joined RAR Hospitality as a corporate consultant and analyst in 2012. Since then, he has helped grow the company from a start-up to its current position as a management company with over 20 hotels in its portfolio. "As an industry outsider, I bring a non-hotelier's perspective when analyzing hotel and corporate operations while ensuring that we support team member growth."



6 JENNIFER GRIBBLE

As VP of the Holiday Inn Express, Staybridge Suites, and Candlewood Suites brands in the Americas, Jennifer Gribble has developed initiatives that bring about a marked change for both guests and owners. She aided in the development of Holiday Inn Express' Formula Blue design solution and the Stay Smart marketing campaign, which is driving strong lifts in awareness, consideration, and favorability.



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NOAH BRODSKY

Noah Brodsky, SVP of worldwide loyalty and customer engagement for Wyndham Hotel Group, transformed Wyndham Rewards into *U.S. News and World Report's* top loyalty program. Adding seven million new members in just 18 months, the program offers guests opportunities to earn points no matter how often they travel. "There's something in it for everyone, and that was the way we really thought about the program," Brodsky says.

9 GIOVANNI FORNI

Giovanni Forni, vice president of Cedar Capital Partners, co-founded the Young Hoteliers Summit Association, which works to improve professional opportunities for young talent in hospitality. The association—and annual global summit in Switzerland—opens a dialogue between hotel companies, educational institutions, and newcomers in the industry.

10 ABI MANDELBAUM

After receiving his MBA from UPenn's The Wharton School, Abi Mandelbaum co-founded YouVis-it, an award-winning virtual reality technology company that creates immersive experiences for travel and leisure, in addition to other industries. The company's ability to harness and monetize virtual reality can help add to hotel partners' sales and marketing initiatives and bolster consumer engagement.