

A bespoke operations service

CMI Leisure delivers customised hotel management services for the expedition and niche-segment cruise market. Company president Dietmar Wertanzl discusses the exciting opportunities available to smaller ships, the smooth planning of itinerary logistics and why choosing a bespoke service option is best.

Imagine a large, impersonal department store. Contrast that with a boutique outlet where everybody knows your name. This is how company president Dietmar Wertanzl wants you to think of CMI Leisure.

"We are highly personalised and offer customised solutions," Wertanzl says. "You can just pick up the phone and connect with a member of our team."

Great care has been taken to select expert staff with a dearth of cruise experience, affording agility and extensive know-how. "We are a nimble organisation," he says, "with all the tools and systems to provide a hands-on service that is quick to market."

Eyes on the horizon

Privately owned CMI Leisure keeps its eyes on changing trends. "The cruise industry is steady, and it's growing. We see new growth among millennials and generation X; we need to be more in tune with different generational needs and wants to offer the best experience."

Being agile in delivery is important because of not only the influx of younger travellers, but also the stark increase in the number of Chinese guests, and guests from Asia more broadly. Wertanzl says that this growth has helped direct CMI Leisure's attention to different cultural needs and service styles.

Another trend CMI Leisure watches out for is the rising popularity of smaller ships. With demand for adventure or expedition cruises climbing, smaller vessels are essential for easier access to remote destinations. This means that itineraries can be more specialised, deviating from traditional routes in favour of more interesting and exciting locations.

"Adventure travel is growing at a record pace," Wertanzl says. "People want once-in-a-lifetime experiences."

Logistics and operations

As a service provider, CMI Leisure will recommend itineraries to clients based on its past experiences, but it mainly fills the role of ironing out logistical kinks on the cruise route.

"We need to have opportunities to resupply the ship during the cruise, so it is critical that we have input into the itinerary," says Wertanzl. "We are more focused on the operational side so that we can provide all the necessary products to ensure a memorable cruise experience."

While considerations of air lifts and supply stocking are aspects of CMI Leisure's services, it also deals with simpler but equally important necessities such as keeping up to date with big-picture trends in food and service. Celebrity chefs are currently in demand, as is having high-quality and creative menus and restaurant options: "People want more choices. They don't want to go to the same dining hall every night."



The MV *Sea Adventurer* is just one of the cruise ships managed by CMI Leisure.

Complete and segmented packages

CMI Leisure provides total hotel operation solutions on board, including food and beverages, housekeeping, administration, dining rooms, logistics and human resources. While the company offers the complete service package, it can also assist clients with modular or segmented approaches.

"We can break it down into each function," Wertanzl says. "We have been approached by companies that just don't like the logistics part because it gives the biggest headaches, for example, so we take care of that."

"We also consult on new ship designs and concepts. A company may approach us to build a new expedition or small ship, for example, meaning we will be partners from the start, which is great, because often we have to take over something that has some flaws. If we start at the beginning of the process, it is easier to co-create with the ship owners or operators."

Expert solutions

With the combination of luxury and adventure becoming such a defining trend, Wertanzl says his company's unique experience and logistical expertise makes it "the perfect partner to take away headaches and provide peace of mind".

"We ensure great delivery and have total quality management systems in place," he says. "We will soon be ISO 2015-certified and we follow rigid procedures to set high standards with our clients."

While CMI Leisure has its eyes fixed on growth, it is also aware of the size limitations of the small-cruise-ship market. For this reason, it is working on providing customised and modular services to bigger cruise ships, such as setting up a restaurant on board megaships. Whether it's small or large vessels, the company's personalised approach gives its clients an edge in business, finding the best solution to fit the brand. ■

Further information

CMI Leisure
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