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**9 October, 2007**

### **Crowne Plaza and Cornell-Nanyang Institute partner to offer hotel industry's first certification programme for meeting directors**



*Programme anticipated to raise the benchmark of meeting service delivery across Asia Pacific*

**Singapore, 8 October 2007** - Crowne Plaza Hotels & Resorts, one of the world's fastest growing upscale hotel brands, has signed an agreement with the Cornell-Nanyang Institute of Hospitality Management to introduce the Crowne Meetings Director Certification Programme to more than 50 hotels across the Asia Pacific region. This commitment to service enhancement and talent development reinforces Crowne Plaza Hotels & Resorts' positioning as the brand leader in the meetings hotel segment.

The Crowne Meetings Director has been a successful and important brand and service differentiator for Crowne Plaza Hotels & Resorts, which is a brand that specialises in all kinds of events and social interactions. In each Crowne Plaza hotel, the Crowne Meetings Director plays a pivotal leadership role in delivering a world-class meetings experience and is at the core of the interaction between the hotel and the client.

The Crowne Meetings Director Certification Programme has an executive training curriculum jointly created by Crowne Plaza Hotels & Resorts and Cornell-Nanyang Institute of Hospitality Management. The programme combines the hotel brand's functional skill sets training with the broader-based industry knowledge provided by the institution.

The 18-month programme covers topics such as team management, customer service, and marketing planning. Candidates are also required to take part in a three-day intensive hospitality sales course in Singapore, offered as part of a professional development programme by the Cornell-Nanyang Institute.

Tony South, acting chief executive, IHG Asia Pacific, said, "The Crowne Meetings Director Certification Programme is the first of its kind in the hotel industry and further strengthens Crowne Plaza's differentiation in the market. Over the past few years, the Asia Pacific region has experienced a strong growth momentum in the meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions market. Today's meetings professionals need to keep pace with the latest industry developments and changing guest needs. With this programme, Crowne Plaza Hotels & Resorts reinforces its commitment to the meetings segment and raises the bar for the industry."

Judy Siguaw, dean, Cornell-Nanyang Institute of Hospitality Management said, "The Crowne Meetings Director Certification brings together academia and the hospitality industry with a unique programme that will enable Crowne Meetings Directors to acquire the skills and knowledge required to succeed in the growing meetings and events sector. These successful graduates will be able to provide the best possible Crowne Plaza meeting experience for their clients."

In addition to providing a comprehensive support for successful meetings and events, Crowne Plaza has also initiated a meetings service training programme for all staff, aimed at aligning operations at each hotel to meet the customised needs of each guest. This is expected to result in an enhanced meetings experience for both meeting planners and attendees.

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### **About IHG**

InterContinental Hotels Group PLC (IHG) of the United Kingdom [LON:IHG, NYSE:IHG (ADRs)] is the world's largest hotel group by number of rooms. IHG owns, manages, leases or franchises, through various subsidiaries, over 3,800 hotels and more than 563,000 guest rooms in nearly 100 countries and territories around the world.

IHG owns a portfolio of well recognised and respected hotel brands including InterContinental® Hotels & Resorts, Crowne Plaza® Hotels & Resorts, Holiday Inn® Hotels and Resorts, Holiday Inn Express®, Staybridge Suites®, Candlewood Suites® and Hotel Indigo®, and also manages the world's largest hotel loyalty programme, Priority

Club® Rewards with over 33 million members worldwide.

The company pioneered the travel industry's first collaborative response to environmental issues as founder of the International Hotels and Environment Initiative (IHEI). The IHEI formed the foundations of the Tourism Partnership launched by the International Business Leaders Forum in 2004, of which IHG is still a member today. The environment and local communities remain at the heart of IHG's global corporate responsibility focus.

IHG offers information and online reservations for all its hotel brands at [www.ihg.com](http://www.ihg.com) and information for the Priority Club Rewards programme at [www.priorityclub.com](http://www.priorityclub.com).

For the latest news from IHG, visit our online Press Office at [www.ihg.com/media](http://www.ihg.com/media)

### **About Cornell-Nanyang Institute of Hospitality Management**

The Cornell-Nanyang Institute of Hospitality Management (CNI) is jointly operated and governed by Cornell University's School of Hotel Administration and Nanyang Technological University's Business School. CNI is located in Singapore, strategically positioned to develop leaders, managers and entrepreneurs for the Asian hospitality and tourism industry. CNI offers three different programs: Masters of Management in Hospitality (MMH), Professional Development Program (PDP) and General Managers Program (GMP). All three programs were designed to alleviate the severe shortage of qualified talent that is currently plaguing the hospitality industry in Asia and the Middle East. For more information on the programmes and latest news, please visit [www.cni.ntu.edu.sg](http://www.cni.ntu.edu.sg)

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