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# 5 questions with Eddy Tannous, vice president, operations – Accor, KSA (https://www.hospitalitynewsmag.com/5-questions-with-eddy-tannous-vice-president-operations-accor-ksa/)

February 07, 2022 (https://www.hospitalitynewsmag.com/2022/02/07/) Rana Freifer

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(https://www.hospitalitynewsmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/4ec032aa-9b4b-46d6-a8b6-83d7dc6e051d.jpg)Hodema Consulting Services (http://www.hodema.net/) sat with Eddy Tannous, vice president, operations – Accor (https://group.accor.com/en) KSA, to hear about the group’s upcoming developments in the kingdom.

1. How did your hotels in KSA handle the Covid-19 crisis?

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the safety and wellbeing of our guests and “heartists” (employees) became our priority. As a result, Accor launched the “ALLSAFE” program in all its hotels worldwide, in partnership with Bureau Veritas, which included re-visiting all our operating standards and introducing new health and safety measures in order to address the risks presented by the spread of the virus. Some of the key initiatives introduced through the ALLSAFE program included the launch of ALLSAFE in

KSA, which was orchestrated in collaboration with the relevant authorities, especially the Saudi Ministry of Health. The initiative aims to ensure we continue being compliant with the rules and regulations of the kingdom. ALLSAFE was received well by our guests throughout the kingdom and had a positive impact on hotel occupancy.



Another critical priority for us as the largest hotel operator in Saudi Arabia is protecting the interest of our hotel owners. We therefore launched a profit protection initiative named "Operations Reimagined" throughout our hotels,

aiming at restructuring our hotel operations in line with the new market demand levels and the protection of profits for owners. In the area of revenue generation, Accor launched incentivizing promotions targeting our loyalty program guests which targets staycation demand throughout the kingdom. It resulted in a double digit growth in RevPAR index (RGI) for our portfolio in 2020 and continued growth throughout 2021.

## 2. Did the tourism laws and regulations initiated due to Covid-19 impact your business?

I believe that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia implemented one of the best crisis management strategies during this pandemic. While one source of business may have been negatively impacted due to flight restrictions, another new type of demand was created as a result, as in the case of local staycation demand. Moreover, the Saudi government issued several support initiatives to assist the private sector in overcoming the financial impact of the crisis with programs like SANED, where the government covered a significant part of the salaries for Saudi employees during the most difficult months of the pandemic. Overall, I believe that the crisis management strategy for Saudi Arabia during Covid-19 was implemented with many variables in mind, including the health and safety of its population as well as the continuity of business.

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## 3. What impact is the growth in KSA having on Accor?

Tourism in Saudi Arabia is going through a very exciting time, and we are proud to be associated with many of its iconic giga projects. Several Accor hotel brands across all segments, from economy and midscale to ultra luxury, are involved. There's a very exciting plan to grow our new lifestyle brands under our Enismore umbrella. We are also proud to be associated with many individual private owners in all parts of the kingdom. We are having one of the strongest development pipelines, with over 40 projects in the active pre-opening phase and many more in the planning stage.

## 4. Is it a good time to invest in KSA?

In line with Vision 2030, and one of its main objectives to strengthen the private sector and create a vibrant society, opportunities are being created to support and incentivize investors, making KSA a very attractive investment for the coming few decades.

## 5. What expansion plans can you share with us?

Accor is currently the largest hotel operator in KSA, with 40 operating hotels. We aim to keep our leading position in the years to come. Today, we have a committed pipeline of 39 projects and many more under serious negotiations.

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The Largest Annual F&B Sourcing Event In The World  
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The poster features the Gulfood logo in a stylized red font. Below it, the event dates and location are listed. The main headline reads 'The Largest Annual F&B Sourcing Event In The World'. A red button with white text says 'REGISTER NOW', and the website 'gulfood.com' is at the bottom. To the right of the text is a circular inset image showing various food items on a table.

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