

# Advisory Board



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btnradius="10"     titletext="Raul    Álvarez   Barrera"  
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Customer-focused visionary. Passionate about Digital with more than 23 years of international digital experience and global roles delivering best in class products and digital experiences. Enabling companies to achieve business goals through digital platforms, experience, localization, and content with always AI and innovation as part of the DNA.

Lucky enough to be awarded during this 2023 on Best Digital and Innovation award by Tourism Innovation Summit 2023, Best Use of technology and Best customer focused strategy by the European Customer Experience Awards, Best Digital Experience and recognized by Google as Best in class about the App strategy.

Design and implementing Products and Digital transformation strategies to transform business at theatre, area and market level generating revenue stream and maximizing ROI. The most recent example at Radisson Hotel Group has over 1,100 hotels in operation and under development in EMEA and APAC. In 2019, Radisson Hotel Group's web presence was spread across 10 distinct websites – one for each of its brands. Today we have a multi-brand Website increasing the online direct contribution 44% over 2019, multiplying by 4 the revenue generated though the App in 2 years. +30% increase in conversion rate though testing & personalization. Implementing content operational excellence and efficiencies, EBITDA at record levels.

Talent Ambassador. Experience on creating Digital teams and Centre of Excellence from scratch. A true believer in achieving results through the people.[/modal\_popup\_box]





[modal\_popup\_box    btnalign="center"    border\_width="2"    btnradius="10"    titletext="Sven Bossu"    bodybg="#002882"    btntext="Read Bio"    btn\_border="#002882"    btnclr="#002882"    hoverclr="#ffffff"    btnbg="#ffffff"    hoverbg="#002882"]Sven joined AIPC as CEO in May 2020. Together with the Board, the Members and the Business Partners he will be spearheading a transformation programme which will result into an entirely new value proposal to Convention and Exhibition Centres across the globe based on the changing needs of the members and the challenges they are facing.

Before joining AIPC, Sven worked as managing director at ESTRO (European Society for Radiation Oncology). He successfully led the branding, marketing and digital transformation of ESTRO – a massive project which was finalized in April 2020. It included a full re-branding, implementation of a new CMS and CRM system, the creation and implementation of a marketing strategy and a complete re-vamp of the annual congress.

Prior to joining ESTRO, Sven worked for 20 years in the financial services world. The first 10 years of his career he worked as an international programme manager at ING, followed by 10 years at SWIFT – the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications.

At SWIFT, Sven oversaw Sibos – SWIFT's flagship event which brings together over 8,000 decision makers from over 150 countries for 4 days to discuss the common challenges the financial community faces and the common solutions to be put in place.

Sven holds a degree in anthropology. He works and lives in Belgium, has two children and loves to read.[/modal\_popup\_box]



[modal\_popup\_box btnalign="center" border\_width="2" btnradius="10" titletext="Fergus Bugg" bodybg="#002882" btntext="Read Bio" btn\_border="#002882" btnclr="#002882" hoverclr="#ffffff" btnbg="#ffffff" hoverbg="#002882"]Fergus holds the role of Senior Vice President of Guest Experience at Miral Destinations, a trusted one-stop destination partner that inspires and connects people through the power of shared experiences, delivering countless memorable moments and joy to guests across leisure, entertainment, and tourism attractions and landmarks throughout Abu Dhabi and beyond. In his capacity, Fergus spearheads the Guest Experience for the entire Miral Group and is entrusted with overseeing every



facet of the destination guest experience.

In 2021, Fergus received prestigious recognition as the Customer Experience Leader of the Year at the esteemed International Customer Experience Awards. This honor was bestowed upon him in acknowledgment of his dedicated efforts in reshaping the destination's customer-centric approach. Fergus has been at the forefront of introducing cutting-edge digital and technological enhancements that ensure seamless interactions with consumers across various channels. His innovations have consistently delivered those memorable "WOW Moments" to our cherished guests. [/modal\_popup\_box]



[modal\_popup\_box btnalign="center" border\_width="2" btnradius="10" titletext="Neetan Chopra" bodybg="#002882" btntext="Read Bio" btn\_border="#002882" btnclr="#002882" hoverclr="#ffffff" btnbg="#ffffff" hoverbg="#002882"]Neetan Chopra is the Chief Digital and Information Officer at IndiGo, India's largest passenger airline. He is responsible for

driving digital, analytics and technology outcomes for the airline, as well as create new digital business models and revenue streams. Previously he held similar technology and digital roles at Dubai Holding and Emirates Airlines. Neetan began his career as a consultant at Accenture.

Neetan is a passionate advocate of 'being digital' as opposed to just 'doing digital' and helping enterprises compete in the digital era. He is on the board of multiple technology start-ups and VCs, helping bring digital advisory to entrepreneurship.

He is a TEDx speaker and frequently speaks on topics such as digital transformation, emerging business models and change management. Neetan has been recognized by Silicon Valley's Constellation Research into BT150 (Business Transformation 150), which is a global elite list of top executives leading innovative business transformation efforts.

Neetan has a quest for continuous learning, holds two Master's degrees (MBA, MCA) and has studied in premium global institutions such as London Business School UK, St. Gallen Switzerland, Bradford UK, NIT Trichy India, and Delhi University India. [/modal\_popup\_box]



[modal\_popup\_box btnalign="center" border\_width="2" btnradius="10" titletext="Dahlia El Gazzar" bodybg="#002882" btntext="Read Bio" btn\_border="#002882" btnclr="#002882" hoverclr="#ffffff" btnbg="#ffffff" hoverbg="#002882"]Dahlia has an OMG-attitude about all things Tech and experience design. She's her own brand, with more than a decade of experience in the hospitality, travel, meetings, and events sector. Dahlia is known as the coffee-fuelled 'go-to' source for trend-setting solutions, latest tech news, and experience



design.

Dahlia El Gazzar / Tech Evangelist / DAHLIA+Agency

Social

handle: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/dahliaelgazzar/>[/modal\_popup\_box]



[modal\_popup\_box btnalign="center" border\_width="2" btnradius="10" titletext="Alex Knigge" bodybg="#002882" btntext="Read Bio" btn\_border="#002882" btnclr="#002882" hoverclr="#ffffff" btnbg="#ffffff" hoverbg="#002882"]Alex is a high-energy leader who thrives at building and inspiring high-performing teams and at fostering cross-functional collaboration to achieve ambitious & transformative revenue growth.

In January 2023, Alex joined ADEC Group as Chief Digital Information Officer and is responsible for thought leadership

and innovation, shaping and steering ADNEC's Group digital transformation and technology strategy and driving a multi-year business growth strategy together with ADNEC's Group Leadership and Business CEOs.

Alex has more than 20 years of combined experience in Consulting, Sales & Marketing, and Digital Transformation. His leadership roles began with Qantas Airlines when he served as the Vice President of eCommerce for their low-cost carrier, Jetstar. At the time, Jetstar was a start-up with a mission to be bold and different in the Australian and Asia Pacific markets. Alex helped to develop its online business which grew extensively, and the airline became one of the fastest growing in its region.

In 2015, Alex joined Emirates Airlines as its first Senior Vice President for Digital. He was tasked with improving the airline's digital and mobile capability. Alex spent the next six years leading the company's digital customer experience strategy, building industry leading digital capabilities through data and modern technologies to create a personalized and connected experience across all digital channels. He was responsible for designing and building the award winning and industry leading Emirates application.

From 2021 till 2023, Alex served as the Chief Sales & Marketing Officer at Education Perfect, the EdTech market leader in Australia and New Zealand owned by Private Equity firm KKR.

Alex holds a Master in Business Administration (MBA) from University of Iowa and a Master in Business from the University of Frankfurt. In 2019, he was selected among hundreds of applicants for the CMO Fellowship program organized by 'The Marketing Academy' in the UK and facilitated by McKinsey over an 11-month period. [/modal\_popup\_box]



[modal\_popup\_box btnalign="center" border\_width="2" btnradius="10" titletext="Greg O'Dell" bodybg="#002882" btntext="Read Bio" btn\_border="#002882" btnclr="#002882" hoverclr="#ffffff" btnbg="#ffffff" hoverbg="#002882"]Greg O'Dell joined Oak View Group as President, Venue Management, OVG360 in April 2022. A renowned leader with extensive management and development experience, Greg's executive oversight spans the sports, entertainment, and convention and meetings industries, and has immeasurably impacted the economic and social health of the communities and venues he has served for decades. With more than 25 years of experience, Greg leads the venue management line of business within OVG360, overseeing venue



operations for the company's properties across the globe including convention centers, arenas, stadiums, performing arts centers, cultural institutions, and state fairgrounds. In this role, he sets strategies to bolster the venue portfolio, sustainable operations, booking and content development, premium & sponsorship sales, and other venue competencies.

Greg joins OVG360 from Events DC, the official convention and sports authority for the District of Columbia, where he was president and chief executive officer from October 2009 through 2022. His primary responsibilities included oversight of three lines of business: Conventions and Meetings, Sports and Entertainment and Special Events. Additionally, he managed a diverse portfolio of venues, from the 2.3 million-square-foot Walter E. Washington Convention Center to the Washington Nationals' baseball stadium as well as Events DC's development projects including the multi-purpose Entertainment and Sports Arena/Washington Wizards training facility, and the redevelopment of the 190-acre RFK Stadium/Armory campus.

In related roles prior to Events DC, Greg served as chief executive officer and general manager of the Washington Convention Center Authority as well as chief executive officer of the D.C. Sports & Entertainment Commission. In these roles, he was responsible for the operations of the Walter E. Washington Convention Center and the RFK Stadium campus, respectively. During that time, Greg also successfully led the public-private development of a \$520 million, 1,175-room Washington Marriott Marquis Convention Center hotel, and the development and construction of the \$611 million, 41,456-seat and Silver LEED Washington Nationals Ballpark.

Preceding his move to District Government, Greg worked for the former management consulting firm BearingPoint (formerly KPMG Consulting). While there, Greg advanced to senior manager and practice lead for Development & Construction Advisory Services, responsible for construction and development services to both public and private clients.

Greg is currently President of the International Association of Convention Centres (AIPC) and serves on boards for Foundation Housing and Wofford College, where he is also Chairman of the Athletic Committee. Additionally, Greg served on the PCMA Board of Directors from 2012-2022 including serving as Board Chairman in 2019.

Greg received a bachelor's degree in finance and government from Wofford College in Spartanburg, S.C. A 1997 inductee into the school's athletic Hall of Fame, Greg is Wofford basketball's third all-time leading scorer with 2,208 points and received Academic All-America honors his senior season. [/modal\_popup\_box]



ADD IMAGE TO  
YOUR ELEMENT!



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bntext="Read Bio"  btn_border="#002882"  btnclr="#002882"  
hoverclr="#ffffff"  btnbg="#ffffff"  hoverbg="#002882"]A  
passionate leader who thrives on driving business
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transformation and achieving tangible outcomes through innovation and technology – Sanjay Sharma is recognized as the top 10 CIOs in the middle east and awarded the BT 150 (Business Transformation) in Silicon valley. As the Chief Technology Officer of Orascom Hotel Management, he is responsible for driving digital transformation and change within the Group. In his previous role with Jumeirah Group and Emirates Airline, he has launched many industry first solutions like region's first facial recognition based online check-in across all Jumeirah Hotels. [/modal\_popup\_box]



[modal\_popup\_box btnalign="center" border\_width="2" btnradius="10" titletext="Ravi Simhambhatla" bodybg="#002882" bntext="Read Bio" btn\_border="#002882" btnclr="#002882" hoverclr="#ffffff" btnbg="#ffffff" hoverbg="#002882"]Ravi Simhambhatla was named Executive Vice President, Chief Digital & Innovation Officer for Avis Budget Group in July 2022. In this role, he leads Avis Budget Group's global technology organization and digital transformation. Prior to joining Avis Budget Group, Ravi served in various

technical leadership roles at Google, United Airlines, Air Lingus, and Tesla Motors.

Ravi has a bachelor's degree in computer science from Richmond College located in the United Kingdom.[/modal\_popup\_box]





[modal\_popup\_box btnalign="center" border\_width="2" btnradius="10" titletext="Amina Taher" bodybg="#002882" btntext="Read Bio" btn\_border="#002882" btnclr="#002882" hoverclr="#ffffff" btnbg="#ffffff" hoverbg="#002882"]Vice President Brand, Marketing, and Sponsorships  
Etihad Aviation Group

Amina Taher has almost 20 years of experience in brand, communications and marketing both internationally and in the United Arab Emirates. With a genuine passion for business, branding, communications and culture, Amina is highly revered in the Middle East.

As Vice President of Brand, Marketing and Sponsorships, Amina leads the overall brand and marketing strategy for the Etihad Aviation Group and manages a portfolio of strategic partnerships.

With master's degrees from Harvard University and London Business School, Amina is an elected member of a number of cross-industry boards. Amina is currently the Abu Dhabi Chairperson for The Marketing Society; an influential membership network across seven international hubs. She is also a board member of Bloom Holdings, a leading group of companies dedicated to developing sustainable and integrated urban communities.

Amina previously held a board position in TwoFour54, Abu Dhabi's leading media free zone offering worldclass infrastructure and 360° support services for the creative community. She was also a Strategy Board member of the Middle East Public Relations Association (MEPRA), providing strategic counsel to help drive greater awareness of their vision and deliver on their mandate. Amina was also an Independent Director of DXB Entertainments – leaders in curating unique

and innovative entertainment experiences in the Middle East. And until 2014, she was a Board member of the UAE Tennis Federation.

Before joining Etihad, Amina held marketing and communication roles at two of the UAE's leading investment firms: Mubadala Investments Company and Dubai Holding.

Amina also co-founded Slices, an organic food company for schools which aims to transform eating habits in the UAE.

A recipient of numerous accolades, Amina was voted Forbes Power Businesswoman in The Middle East in 2020, and also featured in Forbes 50 impactful Marketing and Communications Professionals in the Middle East. [/modal\_popup\_box]



[modal\_popup\_box btnalign="center" border\_width="2" btnradius="10" titletext="Akshar Patel" bodybg="#002882" btntext="Read Bio" btn\_border="#002882" btnclr="#002882" hoverclr="#ffffff" btnbg="#ffffff" hoverbg="#002882"] Akshar Patel is a seasoned professional in the events and hospitality industry, having served as the Senior Director of Events & Strategy, Hotel Operations at Questex. In this role, he spearheaded the launch and execution of The Hospitality Show, a prominent networking event within the hospitality ecosystem. The success of the inaugural 2023 conference, which welcomed over 4,000 guests and exhibitors, highlighted Akshar's ability to connect industry leaders, executives, and partners

effectively.

Prior to his tenure at Questex, Akshar held the position of Vice President of Conventions & Events at AAHOA the largest association of 20,000 hotel owners where he managed a significant portfolio of 175 events and produced the largest Trade Show in the hospitality space with 8,000+ attendees and 500+ Exhibitors. His earlier experience included management roles at the Intercontinental The Willard Washington D.C., showcasing his expertise in high-profile hospitality settings.

In January 2024, Global Hospitality Institute named him in the top 100 most Influential People in USA Hospitality and Travel. Akshar's influence extended beyond his primary roles, as evidenced by his advisory positions at the Philadelphia CVB and Shepard Exposition Services. His contributions to the Events Industry Council APEX Commission and recognition by organizations like Connect Association Magazine and Northstar Meetings Group underscored his reputation as a leader in the events industry. [/modal\_popup\_box]