

May I have a word?

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As the hotel industry constantly evolves, here are some new (tongue-in-cheek) terms to help guide hoteliers.



By Richard Warnick

In an anthology titled “Wind Sprints,” essayist Joseph Epstein relates his desire to leave behind a word or two of his own invention before departing the planet.

Not just any portmanteau mind you, but one that is adopted for general use in contemporary culture. To him, creating a neologism that entered into widespread use and warrants inclusion in a dictionary is a sure way to assure immortality. Well, Professor Epstein, I feel your pain. I could use a little immortality myself. Sadly, creating a couple good neologisms may be the only way left for me to achieve it.

Anyway, here is my first—and perhaps only—shot at neologistic immortality. To increase my chances, I’m upping the number and focusing on the hospitality industry, where I may get a sympathy boost from colleagues.

Brandblurment: A mental condition affecting millions of hotel consumers characterized by a failure to understand what distinguishes one hotel brand from another. Symptoms include befuddlement, frustration and apathy, especially with respect to brand loyalty.

Laboratorium: An inefficiently designed or operated hotel which is a bottomless pit of labor cost.

Costipation: An intestinal malady experienced when hotel owners realize how many costs brands allocate to their hotel in the form of centralized services, loyalty programs, etc. This condition can be especially acute for older owners who recall a time when many of these services were included as part of their franchise fees or management fees.

Facebooking: A quaint hotel industry custom no longer in common use wherein customers actually walk into a hotel without a reservation and attempt to rent a room on the spot.

Franchisee: A license agreement with a third-tier (cheesy) brand that offers virtually no benefits to the licensee.

FUnion Agreement: An agreement between hotel owners/management companies and certain virulent collective bargaining units in which management's efforts to achieve reasonable accommodations is generally met with some form or another of ... you guessed it ... F. U. FUnion agreements are characterized by two key factors: One, they are always adverse to hotel owners and, two, generally adverse to workers because they inhibit employment growth (e.g., "We can't reopen that space as a restaurant because the terms of FUnion agreement will cause us to operate at a loss.").

Fartcast: A reforecast of the annual budget that stinks to high heaven.

Inn-continnence: An unexpected release of excuses for poor performance by hotel management teams that are, for the most part, a bunch of crap.

Hotelaraunt: Thanks largely to Bill Kimpton and a plethora of lifestyle disciples, hotels have become the locus of some of the best restaurants in the country. As a result, it is common for lifestyle hotels to generate 50% or more of their total revenue from F&B. I think these F&B oriented properties deserve their own name, don't you?

Nyet Profit: What a hotel owner will be left with when RevPAR growth is consistently less than zee growth in operating expenses.

G.O.Pee: Piss-poor performance at the gross operating profit line.

Frendzy: A frivolous food trend that gains widespread recognition, not because there is any inherent value in, say, taste or nutrition, but rather because someone with a megaphone (e.g., a food critic) lauds it as new, different or clever. Examples include stacking every component of a meal onto one indistinguishable pile or the use of foam as a distinguishing feature.

Cheump: A chef who is lured—or jumps willingly—into a frendzy.

Cheump Change: An epiphany that occurs when a truly talented chef who was caught up in a frendzy decides he/she is going to get back to doing something worthy of the words "culinary art."

Interbleediary: A parasitic entity known for its ability to attach itself to a host (hotel) and extract a substantial amount of the host's life blood (sometimes referred to as income). Like all parasites, interbleediaries take advantages of certain weaknesses in the host or the host's interdependent parts (brands/management companies) and create an unwanted/unnecessary bridge between the host and their source of nutrients (customers). While the relationship between interbleediaries and their hosts is not mutual, interbleediaries generally do not destroy the host—but only weaken it to varying degrees.

OTAsitis: That sickening feeling hotel owners get each time they are reminded of how much of their income is being consumed by interbleediaries.

Dittobotomy: A brain condition prevalent in many senior level hotel company executives causing a Tourette syndrome type of “us too” response each time they launch a new lifestyle brand.

Hip Splurgery: A focused effort on the part of virtually every hotel brand to devote material money and resources to create new “lifestyle” hotel concepts that are cooler and hipper than the one just announced by a competing hotel brand ... a week ago. See also: Dittobotomy.

Hairbnb: What lodging customers call peer-to-peer home-sharing platforms when the unit they rent has less than satisfactory hygiene standards.

Mastergration: The self-satisfying process by which some major brands integrate individual sales teams from hotels under different ownership into a large city/area-wide team. Mastergration seems to titillate such brands’ sales and marketing strategists even though nothing positive is created as a result. It’s unfortunate the brand management teams forcing this unwanted integration didn’t listen to their parents’ admonitions that too much mastergration could cause blindness.

Millennialist: A self-anointed marketing genius who is convinced that—and attempts to convince you that—(a) millennials are a monolithic customer group, and/or (b) millennials will behave throughout their lifetime the same way they behaved when they were in their 20s and 30s.

Funereality: The realization by a hotel developer or buyer (after the fact) that their underwriting assumptions are hopelessly unachievable—and that their economic funeral is about to ensue.

PIPopotamus: A gigantic product improvement plan that has no chance of making economic sense—and generally results in a change of brands.

PIPsqueak: A plea emitted by a hotel owner trying to resist unreasonable product improvement plans imposed by a brand.

Treknology: The dizzying array of new technology that hotels must employ to meet brand standards and/or stay relevant and competitive. (Two important sub-definitions: RAMulans are overly aggressive chief technology officers and their adherents; and Cling-ons, which are hotel owners holding on for dear life as technology investment soars.) Making up for up for decades of technological malaise, RAMulans mission is (with Cling-on capital) to boldly go where no one has gone before. “Brands... point your phasers at owners with the setting on stun! Kirk out.”

Revparalysis: The stupefying amount of information and analysis considered by modern revenue management systems, often with the effect of causing hotels to chase each other in vicious cycles of comparative pricing.

Wrecktification: The process of fixing a broken hotel through rebranding, reconcepting, renovation or new management.

Brandasaurus: Any of a common species of hotel company comprising a large number of increasingly indistinguishable brands. [Leading cause of Brandblurment.]

Brandasaurus Rex: A particularly large and aggressive sub-species of Brandasaurus. The Brandasaurus Rex has been known to consume its smaller cousin, the common Brandasaurus.

Average Daily Rant (ADR): A ritual carried out by many hotel owners and asset managers unhappy with the pricing policies/execution of the operators who run their hotels.

Brandboozle: The act of making it difficult or impossible to for hotel owners to track/evaluate hotel companies centralized service charges and reimbursables.

Lendoscopy: A process by which lenders determine the credit worthiness of prospective hotel borrowers. See also proctology exam.

Groom Rate: The amount of revenue from weddings as a percentage of total local catering revenue.

Zuckerburger: A gigantic burger onto which consumers pile tons of content from their personal refrigerator, pantry and cupboards, no matter how bad it tastes. A key element of a Zuckerburger is that it must be eaten in public. Restaurants serving Zuckerburgers often award prizes for the Zuckerburger consumer who garners the most unrelated observers and the most embarrassing contents. All Zuckerburgers now come with Russian dressing, regardless of whether you actually want it.

Floperator: A poor hotel operator that fails to achieve optimal performance. Often identified by continual submissions of a Fartcast and G.O.Pee.

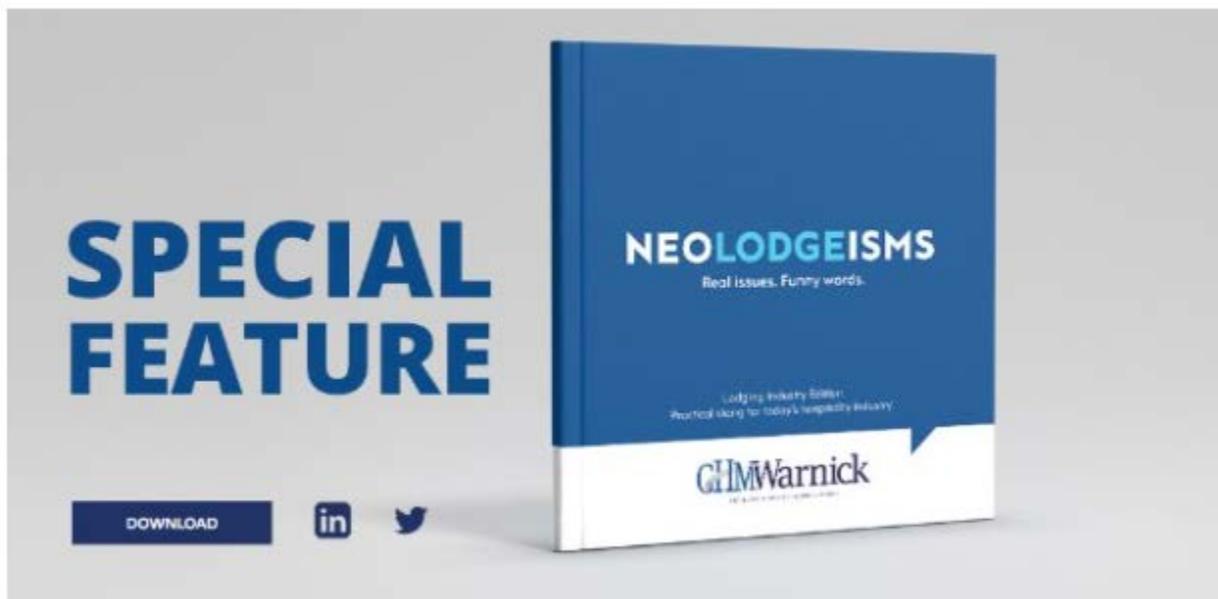
Sloperator: A hotel operator that is sloppy and inconsistent. The key difference between a floperator and a sloperator is market conditions. That is, sloperators might otherwise be floperators but for strong market fundamentals which mask their poor performance.

Moperator: A hotel operator that is brought in to fix a hotel that has been previously run by a floperator or sloperator. Also known as a turnaround specialist.

Brandice: A game of chance played by many inexperienced owners/developers where they treat brand selection and contract negotiation as a game of chance (i.e., engagement without professional assistance). As with most games of chance, the odds are stacked against the brandice player.

Forniployment: What generally happens to an owner/developer who plays brandice.

Neo-Lodger: Me, and hopefully others who will join me in creating more lodging industry-inspired words for inclusion in our dictionary, with attribution to each contributor of course.



[Click here to download the first full edition of the “Neo-Lodge-isms” dictionary.](#)

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