2016 Hotel Blueprint

Employee Development

- General Manager
  - Each General Manager is to review courses offered by the franchise for future development. One continued education course is to be attended annually.
  - Two one-day educational programs will be facilitated to highlight Revenue Management principles and best practices for Human Resources in 2016.

- Director of Sales
  - The Director of Hotel Sales and Marketing will be responsible for the creation and implementation of a Director of Sales Orientation Program for all new hires.
  - The Director of Hotel Sales and Marketing will be responsible for training and development of the Sales Team. There will be a continued focus on the follow up process, account penetration, qualifying accounts, and inner company referrals.
  - Each Director of Sales is to review courses offered by the franchise for future development. One continued education course is to be attended annually.
  - The Sales Team will review the contents of the Google Drive Sales Folder to consolidate its contents.
  - HGI’s Management team will be responsible for the training and development of a Sales Admin. This position is to be utilized as a conduit of future Director of Sales.

- Bench Manager
  - Two bench managers will be training within the group at all times. Each Bench Manager will have a development plan catered to their needs and desires to assist with future advancement. The Bench Managers are to review courses offered by the brands with senior management and select multiple classes that are mutually beneficial to the company and employee’s growth.
  - Bench Managers will develop a housekeeping program to ensure all Aikens Group hotels are operating in a similar fashion and held to the same standard.
  - Bench Managers will become familiar with files and resources on Google Drive and consolidate once the orientations and housekeeping programs are complete.
  - Bench Managers will be involved with opening of new properties.

- Housekeeping Management
  - Select properties will be utilized as conduits of future Executive Housekeepers. Once an Executive Housekeeper is trained they will be moved to another property to build upon their experience in an assistant role, or until a position comes available. The goal is to have two Executive Housekeepers in the ranks at all times.
  - A team of 1-2 General Managers, 2-3 Executive Housekeepers, and one Bench Manager will develop a new training and orientation program for the Housekeeping Department. This new program will be implemented across the entire portfolio to ensure all associates are trained in a similar manner and given the opportunity for success.
  - All properties are to be “3 deep” in all-housekeeping departments to ensure the development of not only the management team but of all associates.
  - An annual meeting of all Executive Housekeepers will be held to discuss best practices.
Front Desk Management
- All properties are to have a Front Office Manager in training.
- A team of 1-2 General Managers and 2-3 Front Desk Managers will develop a new training and orientation program for the Front Desk. This new program will be implemented across the entire portfolio to ensure all associates are trained in a similar manner and given the opportunity for success.
- All Front Desk associates will be trained in the housekeeping department.
- After 12-18 months on the job, all Front Office Managers will be given the opportunity to be rotated to another property to gain further experience and take steps to become a Bench Manager.

Properties are to have monthly department meetings to continually train staff. Weekly meetings with department heads should be held to enhance communication at the property.

Properties with event space are required to hold BEO meetings within one week of a scheduled event.

All servers and Breakfast Bar attendants are to be CPR certified. Throughout the year various CPR trainings will be held.

All Front Desk employees and individuals that serve alcohol must be TIPS certified.

Employee Engagement and Team Building
- 2-3 General Managers are to create a team of their peers in order to form an “Employee Engagement and Team building” initiative for the entire Aikens Group hotel portfolio. Pillars of this program could include:
  - Creating a recognition program based on tenure and/or performance
  - Explore management team building exercises
  - Explore how to improve our communication of successes individually and as a group
  - Take part in brand recognition projects as a group
  - Adopting a charity/cause per quarter.
  - Create a budget for program per hotel.

An increased effort is to be made by senior management to have a greater presence at monthly all employee meetings to communicate the company’s direction.

A tool will be created to help explain the Aikens Group to new employees and to assist in bringing the company together as one entity and culture.

All employee email addresses are to be collected and utilized once the new website is launched. This tool will help communicate Aikens Group successes and new initiatives.

Incentive should be created for the teams that attain departmental goals.

Accountability
- All employees are to be given an annual review. Management reviews will be performed in October and hourly employees are to be completed on their anniversary date. Senior management will review all General Managers. The General Managers and Director of Hotel Sales and Marketing will coordinate Sales Team reviews.
- Aikens Audits will be unannounced and scheduled based off the timing of previous brand inspections.
Sales and Service Improvement Plans

- The entire management team needs to be involved with the planning, development and goal setting of a Sales and Service Improvement Plan.
- Plans are designed to provide additional support to identified properties that have service and/or sales opportunities. The purpose of the meetings is to hold team members accountable, train the entire team on sales/operational procedures, and enhance property operations. These meeting will occur on a bi-weekly basis with senior management to give updates on progress and discuss results.
- Sales Blitzes will be incorporated into the Improvement Plans on an as needed basis.

Sales Planning

Reports and Meetings

- A standardized sales report will be developed to include the tracking of lost business.
- Weekly sales and marketing meetings will be held with the Sales Team to assist in achieving each properties goals and the cross selling of the Aikens Group products. The meeting locations will be on a rotational basis to ensure the entire sales team is familiar with the variety of products the Aikens Group offers.
- On the 2nd Friday of each month a Working Session for the Sales Team will be held. These are 3-4 hour sessions focused on achieving specific goals.

Bridal Market

- Quarterly Wedding Blitzes will be held to maintain and establish relationships with new venues and partners.
- Bridal Shows - A select Director of Sales will be responsible for facilitating and managing the sales process for all Bridal Shows. The Director of Sales will be responsible for ensuring all General Managers are aware of the follow-ups and deadlines that need to be met.
- A standardized “Bridal Revenue Report” for revenue reporting for this segment is in Google Drive and should be utilized by all properties. The new report is due to the Director of Hotel Sales and Marketing on the last Monday of each month.

Sports Market

- Individual properties will be responsible for capturing this segment. Properties that have established relationships must have documentation in high-rise to ensure business is not “stolen” from other properties in the portfolio.

Corporate Accounts

- All corporate account production will be reviewed quarterly to evaluate if production is on pace year over year. Comparison reports are to be discussed at the second owners meeting of each quarter.
- Each properties top 15 accounts are to be visited quarterly.
- Large RFP’s and Corporate accounts will be assigned an account representative. The account representative will take the lead on RFP responses to ensure Aikens Group is strategically quoting rates.
- Volume Grid – Targeted accounts will be selected and assigned to sales team for relationship building opportunities.

Construction Projects and Target Accounts

- At the inception of all construction projects within the Aikens Group territory a specific sales plan will be devised to earn the potential business. A single sales person will be identified as "the lead" on the project and will keep the sales team abreast of the projects progress and sales penetration.
- A list of Target Accounts will be maintained of businesses the Aikens Group does not have in its portfolio of partners. A sales person will be identified as "the lead" on the account and give weekly updates on the progress.
- A checklist will be maintained for each project and account to ensure account penetration is obtained.

Focus Blitzes
- The sales team will administer sales blitzes to ensure market penetration is obtained in various targeted markets. In 2016 they are to include a tour bus, meeting room and association blitz.
- A combination of due dates and working meetings will be established to ensure the follow up from each blitz is successful.

Rate and Inventory Management
- Corporate rates recommendations will be reviewed October 17th to ensure REVPAR growth. Each property needs to have rate recommendations finalized utilizing the correct form by this date. Rates changes will go into effect January. Prior to October 17th, each property must meet with the appropriate contacts to discuss the previous years production and projections for 2017 in order to evaluate rate changes.
- Rack rates need to be reviewed weekly for the upcoming 60 days to ensure all opportunities are capitalized on.

Front Desk Sales
- In an effort to have involvement from the entire staff in the sales process a “Sales Engage Meeting” (formerly Sales Kickoff Meetings) will be held at each property throughout the year. All employees will become knowledgeable on how they can assist with the sales process with a focus on capitalizing on in-house business. Incentives will be available to team members that contribute to the success of obtaining target accounts. The Director of Sales and General Managers will need to find ways to reward and acknowledge the “little successes” which lead to the overall success of the hotel in winning an account. By rewarding the contributing team member(s) with $5 to $10 gift cards, thank you notes, or simply educating the frontline on how their contributions affect the overall sales process will lead to a more effective sales force.
- To improve upon our reservation practices, the due diligence of utilizing an outside company for training or the investment in a training package will be reviewed to see how we can increase our conversion rate on incoming reservations.
- Obtaining company names and communicating them to the General Manager and Sales Team needs to be completed on a consistent basis. Reports will be compiled nightly and given to the management team to review on a daily basis to evaluate opportunities and leads.
- Two Front Desk Sales training classes will be administered in 2016. These will include a Grass Roots Training and Aikens Group Referral Training
Sales and Marketing Tools

Web
- Over 20% of hotel revenue comes from the online marketplace. An effort will be made in 2016 to ensure each property is capitalizing on all of the franchise’s tools and resources to help gain market share in this evolving source of business.
- The Sales Team will research what can be enhanced on TripAdvisor and Expedia to help our positioning and market penetration on both websites.
- All website photography will be evaluated by the management team and investments will be made to ensure all photography exhibits the quality of products offered.
- Group URL’s and Corporate Booking links (1-Click URLs) are to be utilized for each group/corporation. The Sales Team will create an SOP for each brand on how they are created. Corporate booking links will be incorporated with annual rate agreements and when establishing a new account.

Database Growth
- Each GM and Sales person will be responsible for expanding the company’s database of B2B sales. All information gathered on sales calls, blitzes, and/or networking events must be logged into High-rise.
- Sales reports from the previous 12 months will be reviewed by the sales team at each hotel to ensure tagging and zip codes for all B2B contacts are in High-rise.

Email and Social Marketing
- All guest surveys through the franchise website and TripAdvisor need to be responded to within 24 hours.
- Establish a system for working with JCI Media that requires less manpower from Aikens Group.
- An email schedule will be established to send targeted emails in 2016 (weddings, inclement weather, Christmas parties, corporate retreats, meeting rooms, all major holidays, and associations).
- The database will be segmented into regions by zip code for targeted email campaigns.

Aikens Group Collateral
- Update Front Desk Collateral to include Hilton Garden Inn Martinsburg and new referral rates
- Create Corporate Apartment flyer for Referral System
- Distribute Aikens Group collateral at each property and ensure sales team has proper points of contact for each division.

Welcome Centers
- It is each property's responsibility to establish and maintain relationships with the state welcome centers.
- The corporate office will be responsible for distributing brochures to each welcome center in Virginia. It is each properties responsibility to ensure the corporate office has 2,500 rack cards on hand to distribute.