



Helping hotel owners turn their investment into a better performing business.

*Independent commercial advice, practical support and experienced hotel
leadership for independent, family owned and first-time hotel operators.*

BIG HOTEL EXPERIENCE, INDEPENDENT OWNER PERSPECTIVE.

INTO THE ARENA'S FOUNDER



I'm John Thompson, the founder of Into the Arena. I bring more than 30 years of executive commercial experience across hotel and hospitality businesses in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the USA and Europe.

As an experienced Chief Commercial Officer, I have been responsible for sales, marketing, revenue management, digital, distribution and reservations across hotel portfolios generating more than \$400 million in annual revenue and comprising more than 60 hotels.

My career has included senior leadership roles with Hilton, IHG, Minor Hotels, Thistle Hotels and Salter Brothers Hospitality, together with consulting, coaching and advisory work for hotel owners and operators.

Today, I use that experience differently.

Into the Arena gives independent hotel owners access to the commercial thinking, disciplines and experience normally only found inside major hotel groups.

My role is not to tell you how to run your business. It is to help you understand it better, challenge assumptions, identify opportunities and make better-informed decisions about your hotel and your investment.

Leadership Experience

Hilton

IHG
HOTELS & RESORTS

thistle

MINOR
HOTELS



Consulting, Training, Coaching and Advisory Experience



DE VERE

MINOR
HOTELS

INTO THE ARENA'S PHILOSOPHY

Owning a hotel means being in the arena.

Every day brings decisions about guests, people, pricing, costs, investment and performance. For independent owners, those decisions are often made without the specialist teams and resources available to large hotel groups.

Into the Arena exists to help close that gap.

Our philosophy is inspired by Theodore Roosevelt's belief that "the credit belongs to the person who is actually in the arena".

I believe successful hotel ownership comes from understanding your business, asking the right questions, making informed decisions and continually looking for ways to create more value for guests, employees and owners.

You do not need to become an expert in every aspect of hotel commercial performance. You just need access to someone who can help you understand what matters.

THE QUESTIONS I HELP OWNERS ANSWER

Is my hotel performing as well as it should?	Where are we losing revenue or unnecessarily increasing costs?
Are we charging the right rates?	Are my team focused on the things that make the greatest difference?
Are we too dependent on Booking.com, Expedia or other online travel agents?	What information should I receive to properly understand performance?
Are our sales and marketing activities generating profitable business?	Should I invest in additional people, technology, marketing or facilities?
Are we attracting the right guests and market segments?	How can I improve the value of my hotel over time?

HOW I SUPPORT HOTEL OWNERS

I provide independent commercial advice and practical support across five areas.

Click on each solution to discover more (or read on below)

Hotel Commercial Health Check	Revenue, Sales and Marketing Performance
Owner Advisory	Hotel Opening, Repositioning and Improvement
Owner & Team Capability	

INTO THE ARENA'S SOLUTIONS

Hotel Commercial Health Check

Understand how your hotel is really performing.

When you are close to the day-to-day operation, it can be difficult to know whether performance is genuinely being maximised. I undertake an independent review of your hotel to identify strengths, risks and opportunities.

Depending on your hotel, this may include:

Revenue and profitability performance	Sales and marketing effectiveness
Room rates and pricing strategy	Market segmentation optimisation
Occupancy and market positioning	Reservations and enquiry conversion
Revenue management review	Guest experience improvement
Distribution and OTA performance	Commercial systems and processes
Direct booking performance	Team structure and responsibilities

Outcome

A straightforward assessment of where your hotel stands, where value may be leaking and which opportunities deserve your attention first.

Revenue, Sales & Marketing Performance

Generate better business, not simply more business.

Hotel performance is not just about occupancy. The right combination of price, market segment, distribution channel and customer can make a significant difference to profitability.

I help owners understand and improve:

Pricing and revenue strategy	Groups, meetings and events
Market segmentation	Marketing effectiveness
OTA strategy and commission costs	Account management
Direct booking opportunities	Sales conversion
Corporate and local account sales	Commercial reporting

Outcome

A clearer commercial strategy focused on generating the most valuable business for your hotel.

Owner Advisory

Independent advice when you need another experienced perspective.

Independent and first-time owners frequently have important decisions to make without access to an experienced hotel commercial executive.

Into the Arena can act as an independent adviser to the owner, providing practical commercial guidance without the cost of employing another senior executive.

Support might include:

Monthly performance reviews	Reviewing sales and marketing plans
Budget and forecast challenge	Challenging operator recommendations
Reviewing management reports	Preparing for owner or lender meetings
Commercial strategy	Reviewing management company performance
Evaluating investment proposals	Supporting major commercial decisions

Outcome

Greater confidence that the decisions you make are commercially informed and aligned with your investment objectives.

Hotel Opening, Repositioning & Improvement

Get important projects right the first time.

Opening, acquiring or repositioning a hotel requires dozens of commercial decisions, often while the owner is managing many other priorities.

I can provide experienced project leadership for:

New hotel openings	Pricing and positioning changes
Hotel acquisitions	Technology implementation
Repositioning existing hotels	Reservations processes
Commercial strategy development	Team structures
Sales and marketing launch plans	Commercial readiness

Outcome

Clearer planning, stronger commercial foundations and reduced risk during important periods of change.

Owner & Team Capability

Build a business that becomes less dependent on outside support.

Sometimes the greatest opportunity is not changing the strategy. It is helping the people running the hotel understand the commercial impact of the decisions they make every day.

I work directly with owners, general managers and hotel teams to develop practical capability in:

Understanding hotel commercial performance

Guest experience

Revenue and pricing

Leadership

Sales

Managing performance

Negotiation

Commercial decision making

Reservations

Team effectiveness

Outcome

A more commercially confident owner and team who can make better decisions independently.

WHY HOTEL OWNERS CHOOSE INTO THE ARENA

Hotel experience, not just consulting experience

My advice comes from more than three decades working inside hotel businesses and personally being accountable for commercial performance. I understand the realities behind the numbers.

Independent advice

I am not an operator, hotel brand, OTA, technology vendor or marketing agency. My responsibility is to help you make the best decision for your hotel and your investment.

Commercially focused

Every recommendation is considered through the lens of revenue, profitability, guest value, productivity and long-term business value.

Practical, understandable advice

Hotel terminology and commercial reporting can become unnecessarily complicated. My role is to make the complex understandable and translate information into practical decisions and actions.

Support sized for independent owners

You may not need a Chief Commercial Officer, Revenue Director, Sales Director and Marketing Director. But occasionally you may need access to someone who has led those functions.

ENGAGEMENT MODELS

Small hotel businesses need flexibility, so support can be structured around the problem you are trying to solve.

Owner Advisory Ongoing access to independent commercial advice. Ideal for owners wanting someone experienced to review performance, challenge thinking and provide guidance when important decisions arise. <i>Available through monthly advisory retainers or individual advisory sessions.</i>	Hotel Commercial Health Check A structured independent review of your hotel's commercial performance. <i>Delivered as a fixed-fee engagement with clear findings, priorities and recommended actions.</i>
Project Support Experienced leadership for a defined commercial project such as an opening, repositioning, restructure, technology implementation or performance improvement initiative. <i>Typically delivered as fixed-fee projects or agreed daily rate</i>	Coaching & Capability Development Practical development for owners, general managers and hotel teams <i>Delivered through individual coaching, workshops or tailored development programmes fee basis.</i>

INVESTMENT

Every hotel is different, so rather than selling standard consulting packages, I first take the time to understand your hotel, your objectives and the commercial questions you are trying to answer.

From there, I recommend the simplest level of support required and provide a clear proposal covering scope, outcomes, timing and investment.

CONTACT

You do not need to know exactly what support you need before getting in touch.

If you own, operate or are considering investing in a hotel and would value an independent conversation about its performance, I'd be happy to talk. Sometimes an hour looking at the business from a different perspective is enough to identify the next question worth asking.

I'd love to work with you to support you, your team and your business improve performance, so please reach out to me to arrange an informal coffee chat and we can take it from there.

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