Hotel Lawyers

Aggressive and passionate advocacy for hotel owners and lenders

Unequaled hospitality experience makes the difference
Clients find a lot of advantages in working with JMBM’s Global Hospitality Group®. Here are 5 things that set us apart from everyone else:

1. **Hotel Lawyers.** We are hotel lawyers. We provide business and legal advice on virtually every kind of hospitality transaction or issue.

2. **Aggressive and passionate advocates.** We are the champion of beleaguered owners, developers, investors, lenders and independent operators who want to level the playing field.

3. **No conflicts with the mega-brands.** We intentionally do NOT represent the traditional hotel mega-brands. You never have to worry that we will be compromised or restrained in advancing your interests as an owner, lender or independent operator.

4. **More hospitality experience than any other law firm.** We have helped clients with more than 4,500 properties, valued at more than $112 billion. This business and legal experience provides the largest virtual database of transactional terms in the world. No law firm can match our experience and credentials in hospitality. We are “best in class.”

5. **Connections, relationships and deal flow.** We know virtually everyone in the hospitality industry and they know us. We can quickly assemble the right team of experts for whatever challenge you are facing. We know who to call to get the right resources, open doors and create solutions for you.

**MEET SOME OF OUR TEAM**

**HILTON ANATOLE, DALLAS.** The Crow Family hired our team to assist them in repositioning their landmark Anatole hotel. We helped them terminate a long-term, branded management agreement. Then we conducted an RFP for a new branded manager (using JMBM’s HMA PRO™) and finalized a deal with Hilton Hotels.

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“Transitional” refers to hotel and restaurant work involving purchase and sale, financing, management and franchise agreement, hotel mixed-use structuring and other business and regulatory matters.
The key is finding the right player for each role. The project can be anywhere, as long as you get the right team members to guide and execute the process.

Purchase and sale

What is the best way to market your property? What are the optimal tax and control structures? How do you “win the deal” in a competitive bidding situation? What due diligence is really essential? How do you deal with a union that is blocking the assignment of your ground lease? How can you close the deal quickly?

Whether you are a buyer or a seller, and whatever the issues at hand, JMBM can help you identify, evaluate — and resolve — all the issues that could hinder your transaction or affect its value.

We have been there before. We can help you avoid pitfalls and seize opportunities.
THE RIGHT TEAM

Our team of experts has defended more than 750 ADA and related accessibility claims across the country for owners, operators, developers and lenders. The targeted properties are all “public accommodations” including hotels, resorts, timeshares, bed and breakfasts, restaurants, spas, sports facilities, wineries, theaters and other commercial real estate, such as apartment communities, shopping centers, retail stores and banks. We also assist clients in Department of Justice investigations, administrative proceedings and litigation.

Being ADA-friendly is good business. Accessibility compliance is the law. And it is much cheaper to be proactive on accessibility issues than to defend lawsuits. That is why a significant part of our practice is devoted to helping clients with proactive accessibility-compliance audits and developing written policies and procedures. We also advise on website accessibility, online reservation systems, Certified Access Specialist (CASp) strategies and claim prevention.

We can help you make your property ADA compliant by utilizing our team of experienced accessibility consultants, website and telecommunication specialists, trainers, architects and design professionals, contractors and construction companies. Working with the right consultants, we quickly analyze your property and procedures for accessibility issues from barrier removal to “cyber accessibility,” make cost-effective recommendations, and develop the best compliance and litigation strategy. We can also counsel you on insurance coverage and possible indemnity claims against owners, design professionals, contractors and other potentially responsible parties.

Representative clients for single property and national, system-wide accessibility audits and compliance matters include Red Lobster, Olive Garden, Extended Stay America, Motel 6 (G6), Strategic Hotels, Best Western, Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants, Joie de Vivre Hotels, Rock Bridge Capital, JPMorgan Chase Bank, Wells Fargo Bank, The Limited, Best Buy, Victoria’s Secret, PG&E, Bed Bath & Beyond of California, Inc., CIM Group, Inc., Union Bank, City National Bank, Relax the Back, City OF Santa Clara, The Honda Center, SAP Center and the City and County of San Francisco. Our engagements range from a single location bed and breakfast to chain-wide compliance for a 6,000-property chain.

RESORT AT SQUAW CREEK, SQUAW VALLEY. We help owners of single hotels, portfolios and national chains develop a proactive approach to accessibility compliance and challenges, as we did for the owner of this prestigious ski resort.

EXTENDED STAY AMERICA, SACRAMENTO. We have performed system-wide accessibility audits for Extended Stay America hotels (including prototype plan checking), and have assisted them nationally with proactive and defensive ADA and related accessibility compliance matters.

TIMES SQUARE, NEW YORK CITY. We have defended more than 750 ADA and related accessibility claims for owners of hotels, restaurants, spas, wineries, performing arts theaters, and other commercial real estate. In this case, our international hotel owner-operator client hired us for national representation in ADA and accessibility matters, including the defense of the high profile Department of Justice ADA compliance “sweep” of more than 50 hotels in Manhattan’s Times Square entertainment district.

Being ADA-friendly is good business. Accessibility compliance is the law. And it is much cheaper to be proactive on accessibility issues than to defend lawsuits.
The Chinese Investment Group® is a dedicated team of hotel and real estate lawyers in JMBM’s Global Hospitality Group® that provides a gateway for Chinese investment in the United States. Using our unequaled global experience gained in hotel and real estate transactions, the Group provides Chinese investors with legal and business advice to make prudent and economically successful hotel and real estate investments in the United States.

The Group and its network of reliable third party professionals help Chinese investors identify, analyze, evaluate, validate, acquire, finance and manage hotel and real estate opportunities.

We also represent hotel and other commercial real property developers seeking financing from foreign investors — particularly Chinese investors — using the EB-5 immigrant investor visa program.

We have worked on dozens of EB-5 financings from every angle, and as a result we know the players in the EB-5 world, including many of the regional center operators throughout the U.S. and marketing agents operating in China. We use our expertise and relationships to make good choices and guide our clients through the entire EB-5 financing process. We also assist lender clients in structuring their relationships with EB-5 investments.

We have closed more than $1.5 billion in EB-5 financing for our clients’ development projects, and we sourced more than half of that amount.

How do you gain more than 30 years of experience and $112 billion of transaction experience?

You do it one day at a time ... one deal at a time.

We bring credibility to our clients and their transactions.
We are a major gateway of hotel finance — the bridge between providers and consumers of capital. We facilitate the flow of capital with our legal expertise and hospitality industry knowledge.

We are a major gateway of hotel finance. For many years, we have represented individual and portfolio owners as well as senior and mezzanine debt lenders, preferred equity, joint venture and other investors on many hundreds of hotel financings, refinancings, and recapitalizations.

We are part of the very fabric of the hospitality industry. In addition to working closely with capital providers on financings and investments, for more than 30 years, we have been thought leaders in hotel finance hosting and participating in hotel finance conferences, bringing together providers and consumers of hotel finance and hotel investors, developers, owners and brands. We have a long history of helping get deals done and creating strong relationships.

From our deals and our continuous dealings with financing sources, we know the significant players, regularly represent both consumers and providers of every kind of capital, and we understand their respective needs and approaches. We are not brokers and do not compete with them. We facilitate the flow of capital with our legal expertise and hospitality industry knowledge. Combining our unique hospitality expertise with a long history of commercial and real estate finance experience, we know what it takes to protect the legal and business interests of every player in the capital stack.

Because of our expertise and leadership in hospitality lending, we regularly represent lenders on their hotel loans. The properties shown here are representative of some of the smaller loans we have handled. We also handle financing for larger, more complex properties and resorts, domestically and internationally, and portfolios, including many hotels in the brand families of Hilton, Intercontinental, Marriott (including Starwood), Hyatt, Best Western and Choice. Some high-profile lending work includes the W Hollywood, Four Seasons Scottsdale, Four Seasons Aviara, Ritz-Carlton Highlands, Marriott Renaissance Las Vegas, and many more.

W HOTEL, HOLLYWOOD. We worked on many aspects of this mixed-use hotel property, including land use, almost $300 million of senior debt and mezzanine financing for development, and EB-5 financing for the Drai's Vegas-style night club and the Delphine fine-dining restaurant at the hotel.

BRING US IN EARLY. DO IT RIGHT FROM THE START.
Urban mixed-use can be the most challenging and rewarding of all development projects. Studies have shown that the right hospitality elements combined with the right mix of retail, office, residential, hotel, fractional, spa, and entertainment components can enhance the value of the other elements in a mixed-use project by 34% or more and allow more attractive financing. By adding a hotel or other hospitality elements to an urban environment, a dynamic and sophisticated set of opportunities and challenges comes into play.

Locking down the right legal structure for your mixed-use project is critical. Just as the right mix of elements will enrich the value of each of the parts, the wrong structure or the wrong hospitality element will have a negative impact on the other elements.

But what is that right mix? How do you achieve it? How do you create a dynamic environment where each component enhances the value of the others? Is the overall design and infrastructure efficient? Is there a fair allocation of costs? How will you determine workable access, shared parking, and the use and control of common areas? How do you avoid the mistakes that erode value?

Our team has the industry experience and legal expertise gained from more than 100 hotel mixed-use projects in every major market in the United States, Latin America, Europe and Asia to help you avoid the pitfalls that have trapped so many developers and capital providers. We understand — from the perspectives of developers, investors and lenders — how the hotel management agreement should incorporate and deal with mixed-use components, the key issues that need to be properly addressed, and the business and legal structures that create value.

We can also help you assemble your hospitality development team with experienced and successful team members to optimize everything from entitlements, architecture, construction and banking to management, marketing, financing and more — from conception through opening and then into ongoing operations.

TRUMP OCEAN CLUB INTERNATIONAL HOTEL & TOWER, PANAMA CITY. Luxury hotels like this often provide the spark plug to energize and create value with high-end mixed-use for hotel-anchored residential, condo hotel, retail and office projects. We have represented the Trump Organization and other clients on more than 100 hotel mixed-use projects throughout the U.S., Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and Europe.

THE WOODLANDS, TEXAS. The Woodlands project, one of the largest hotel mixed-use developments in the United States, demonstrates how each component of a hotel mixed-use project enhances the other. Residential elements fetch higher prices and rents, retail and restaurants generate more sales, and hotels achieve significantly higher revenue per available room (RevPAR).
On average, it costs 38% more to operate a hotel as a union shop. Union work rules are cumbersome and expensive. And operators often have trouble delivering great service with a union work force. That is why it is important to avoid unionization where you can, and negotiate hard for the best terms possible in any neutrality/card check or collective bargaining agreement.

We train management how to spot the red flags of union organization and develop effective union prevention strategies. Employers in the middle of a dispute over an organizing drive or an unfair labor practice complaint rely on our prompt and creative responses. Others count on us to develop strategies for hiring the workforce of their choice.

When all you can do is make the best of the situation with a union, we are very effective in negotiating better terms and assisting employers in developing campaigns to win back the hearts, minds and loyalties of their workforce.

To encourage a productive workforce and help minimize litigation, our hotel labor and employment lawyers stress a proactive approach to prevent problems. But when potential litigation arises, our clients receive our immediate attention. Whether it is a wage and hour lawsuit, claims of sexual harassment or discrimination, employee terminations or workplace violence, we respond quickly and aggressively.

HILTON SAN FRANCISCO FINANCIAL DISTRICT. During a protracted city-wide strike, we successfully negotiated the only labor contracts in the City with this hotel’s various unions. We have also served as general counsel to the owner on virtually all legal matters including branding, management, financing, land use and entitlements, and ownership structure issues.

L’ENFANT PLAZA HOTEL, WASHINGTON D.C. We represent many hotel owners and operators nationwide on their labor matters, such as the collective bargaining agreement for the L’Enfant Plaza Hotel.

CHINATOWN, NEW YORK CITY. JMBM represented a wealthy Chinese family in multi-state federal court litigation against the New York hotel union, charging unlawful unionization of one of its hotels in Manhattan. The outcome stopped union organizing at all of the family’s 8 New York City hotels.
We have negotiated, re-negotiated, litigated, arbitrated and advised on more than 2,600 hotel management and franchise agreements.

We have current state-of-the-art experience in dealing with every major branded hotel operator, most of the independent managers, and all the significant franchisors.

Our business and legal experience from all these deals provides the largest virtual database of hotel management and franchise agreement terms in the world. JMBM can help you confidently establish reasonable “market” terms for your deal. With our HMA PRO™ process, we can help you recruit the right brand and get a management agreement you can live with.

Many of the hotel management agreements we work on involve mainstream “bread and butter” hotels — select service and full service; branded, independent and boutique.

But we have also worked on some of the most iconic hotels in the world, such as The Plaza, Hilton Anatole, Hilton San Francisco, Omni Dallas Convention Center, InterContinental Jakarta, Regent Hong Kong, Trump Panama and Schloss Velden Austria.

And of course, there are many luxury properties and world-class resorts we have worked on too, like the Ritz-Carlton Bali, Four Seasons Maui, Las Ventanas, The Boulders, and Turnberry Resort & Spa.

Our business and legal experience from more than 2,600 hotel management agreements provides the largest virtual database of hotel management and franchise agreement terms in the world.

THE PLAZA, NEW YORK CITY. We have performed hotel management agreement work on some of the most iconic hotels in the world, such as The Plaza, Hilton Anatole, Hilton San Francisco, Omni Dallas Convention Center, InterContinental Jakarta, Regent Hong Kong, Trump Panama and the Schloss Velden Austria.

Although most hotel management agreements are “one-off” deals, we have handled a number of portfolio transactions. The photos here are representative of the 27-hotel portfolio owned by Lodgian and its private equity fund owner. We helped them select 6 operators and complete hotel management agreements for all 27 franchised hotels in 17 states using JMBM’s HMA PRO™ process.

THE PLA$$A, NEW YORK CITY. We have performed hotel management agreement work on some of the most iconic hotels in the world, such as The Plaza, Hilton Anatole, Hilton San Francisco, Omni Dallas Convention Center, InterContinental Jakarta, Regent Hong Kong, Trump Panama and the Schloss Velden Austria.

OMNI DALLAS CONVENTION CENTER HOTEL. The City of Dallas hired us to conduct a request for proposal (using JMBM’s HMA PRO™ approach) for hotel brands to manage this large, convention center hotel. We assisted in the selection process and then negotiated a “qualified hotel management agreement” meeting the requirements of the Internal Revenue Code for a project financed with tax-exempt bonds.
When they tell you that something is a “standard practice,” we might tell you something different.

**INTERCONTINENTAL, JAKARTA.** JMBM assisted the owner of this landmark Jakarta hotel in terminating a long-term, no-cut, management agreement with a top luxury brand, selecting a new operator and rebranding the hotel as the InterContinental Midplaza.

**TURNBERRY ISLE RESORT, AVENTURA.** JMBM’s Global Hospitality Group® represented the owner of this iconic resort — in designing and executing a successful strategy to terminate a top luxury brand’s management contract and remove the branded operator from the property. The contract had 50 years left to run. The victory included winning a Federal Court decision upholding our interpretation of applicable legal principles superseding the contract terms. The operator’s suit to regain control of the hotel was soundly defeated on all grounds.

**AYANA RESORT & SPA, BALI.** As the Ritz-Carlton Bali, this fabulous resort arguably built the luxury chain’s resort brand in Asia. Our team negotiated critical management agreement amendments that ultimately enabled the owner to terminate the long-term, no-cut contract. We developed the strategy and filed the litigation that successfully ousted the luxury brand operator. We then assisted the owner in selecting a new luxury operator and negotiating an agreement that was much more favorable to the owner.

It is always best to start out with the right brand and operator for your hotel... and an agreement with fair terms you can live with. But when you don’t have that advantage and the situation becomes unbearable, what can you do as an owner to renegotiate or terminate a long-term, “no-cut” management agreement?

We have seen it all: Operators who insist on keeping 5 restaurants open 24 hours a day even though they are empty and losing a fortune. Overstaffed executive and line staff that bloat payrolls or make your hotel look like a center for trainees or retirees. Branded operators delivering only 5% of the hotel’s business through its reservation and marketing systems. Expensive capital improvement programs that may stroke operator egos but don’t contribute to owner NOI or guest satisfaction. The list goes on.

We have developed some very effective tools for dealing with long-term hotel management agreement problems. Clients really value our more than 30 years of business and legal experience to help them evaluate the situation, identify alternatives, develop successful strategies and execute them.

The right outcome can unlock millions of dollars of value.
Like hotels, restaurants have their own customs, practices and norms — and their success depends upon the underlying operating business. Whether your restaurant is a stand-alone business with a celebrity chef or a nationwide chain, a portfolio of quick service restaurants or a unique concept that provides energy to a mixed-use environment, you need hospitality lawyers with experience across the full range of issues that restaurants encounter. Restaurants have tapped the expertise of our hospitality lawyers for decades to assist with issues such as:

- ADA & accessibility
- Chef deals
- Contracts, joint ventures, incentivized agreements
- Construction & development
- Day-to-day operational issues
- Environmental & regulatory
- Financing, including public finance
- Franchising & branding
- Intellectual property & trademark
- Labor & employment
- Land use & entitlement
- Lease negotiation
- Litigation
- Purchase & sale
- Workouts, restructuring, bankruptcy

**THE STRAND HOUSE, MANHATTAN BEACH.** We provided a range of legal services for this restaurant, including acquisition and leasing, structuring a joint venture, procuring a liquor license and resolving land use issues relating to its unique beachfront setting.

**CELESTINO DRAGO. JOSIAH CITRIN AND MÉLISSE.**

We structure agreements addressing the special needs of signature restaurants and celebrity chefs. These include buying or leasing restaurants, structuring “chef deals,” financing, liquor license, branding, ADA defense and compliance, and trademark matters. Shown here are Celestino Drago, Chef/Founder of the Celestino Drago Restaurant Group and Josiah Citrin, Chef/Owner of the highly acclaimed Mélisse Restaurant in Santa Monica, California.

**HILTON GRAND VACATIONS CLUB AT MARBRISA, CARLSBAD.**

Vacation ownership projects like this Hilton Grand Vacations Club are a vibrant addition to any mixed-use hospitality development. For this property, JMBM’s hospitality lawyers advised on branding and management issues, and the integration of hotel and timeshare facilities. Consumer demand and satisfaction levels continue to set new highs for these kinds of projects. Development and sales are limited only by access to financing.

**UNEQUALED HOSPITALITY EXPERIENCE.**

Our lawyers have the knowledge and experience to assist owners, developers and lenders in all aspects of acquisition, development, formation, regulatory compliance, finance, and management matters relating to timeshares, fractional interests, private residence clubs, destination clubs, whole ownership condominiums, and right-to-use vacation clubs.

Whether the offering is based on the conveyance of an interest in a club, trust, lease, or fee simple property, we have helped our clients form, register and finance it.
The most important part of a hotel deal is driven by the hotel issues. That is why you need experienced hotel lawyers leading your legal team on your hotel deals.

Whether you are the lender, owner, buyer or investor, troubled assets raise questions. We have answers.

- What makes hospitality assets unique?
- What are the winning strategies for distressed hotel assets?
- How can SNDAs dramatically affect the outcome?
- Where should you be on the intervention strategy matrix?
- When do you “work out” or “take possession”?
- When are long-term, no-cut hotel management agreements really terminable?
- How do you minimize “cram down” risk?

Clients look to us as strategic advisors to assist in answering these questions and more. We develop and execute the “critical game plan.” We understand how to identify and work with the strengths and vulnerabilities of each player in the capital stack — whether that means maximizing a creditor’s recovery, protecting the owner’s assets, reorganizing a viable business or providing asset acquisition and recapitalization strategies for opportunistic buyers.

Over the years, JMBM has been through all the business cycles — several times. Clients trust us with their most complex high-profile projects.
A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

Why does experience matter so much?

I have always found that the more complex and significant the challenge, the more I want the benefit of the greatest experience available. With more experience, you are almost certain to get a better outcome, achieved faster, cheaper, and with less risk.

It is the same with hotels. Hotels are NOT just real estate. Hotels are complex operating businesses, integrally intertwined with special-purpose real estate. So when you have an important hotel matter, why would you ever consider using just a “part time” hotel lawyer, even though they may be a great real estate attorney?

Our hotel lawyers have helped clients all over the world with more than 4,500 properties, valued at more than $112 billion.

Our unequaled hotel experience means better results for you.
Can you afford anything less?

Sincerely,

Jim Butler, Chairman
Global Hospitality Group®
WE BRING CREDIBILITY TO OUR CLIENTS AND THEIR TRANSACTIONS

FOR INDUSTRY VETERANS
Our team brings consistency and efficiency to the deal. JMBM extends your capacity, giving you the power to exploit other opportunities and handle crises. We free up your time to handle the things that only you can do.

We fill in the “gaps” of your team’s expertise when special needs arise, such as management agreements, franchise agreements, ADA compliance or defense, litigation, labor, securities, financing or specialized contracts.

FOR SOPHISTICATED PLAYERS NEW TO HOSPITALITY
We provide hotel-specific knowledge about what is “market” or “customary.” When you want to be aggressive, we know how to play the “edges.” Applying creative and unusual approaches, we can help solve sticky problems. We can help you know what’s a fair deal and how to get it.

FOR FIRST-TIME HOTEL OWNERS AND LENDERS
We offer practical guidance to help you confront the many new issues presented by the hospitality industry. We won’t let you be fooled when someone tells you, “we never do that.” Equally important, we can help you ask the right questions or find an alternate solution to accomplish your goal.

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Unequaled hospitality experience makes the difference…
JMBM’s Global Hospitality Group®

This brochure describes some of our most asked-about services. However, we provide legal and business advice on virtually every issue where hotels and the law intersect, including the following:

- ADA defense & compliance
- Business structuring
- Cannabis
- Celebrity chef agreements
- Construction
- Corporate governance
- Cybersecurity
- Data privacy
- Development
- Due diligence
- Equity & joint ventures
- Expert witness
- Fiduciary duty
- Financing
- Foreign investment
- Franchise & licensing
- Hotel-specific contracts
- Labor & employment
- Land use & environmental
- Leasing and ground leasing
- Litigation
- Management agreements
- Mergers & acquisitions
- Proposition 65
- Purchase & sale
- Qualified Opportunity Zones
- Shareholder disputes
- Tax
- Trusts & estates
- Trademark & copyright
- Union negotiations
- Vacation ownership
- Workouts, bankruptcies & receiverships

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