Simon Grangereau is an alumnus of the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management. Growing up, he had many opportunities to travel around the world. These experiences influenced him in many ways, shaping him into the culturally diverse individual he is today. Simon is fluent in three different languages, English, Spanish, and French, and has conversational Mandarin skills, which he picked up living in Beijing, China for 7 months in 2010-2011. After his return state side, he decided to change majors at Temple University and pursue Tourism and Hospitality Management with an Event Leadership concentration. He has experience in event production and management with a strong background in event and experience design.

Simon completed his senior internship with Convershare in Alicante, Spain as a marketing, sales and web development intern. This opportunity gave him the chance to once again learn and adapt to a new culture while shaping his future endeavors. After graduation, Simon decided to move west to Los Angeles, California, where he secured a position with Wizard World as an events coordinator. In 2015, Simon will travel to 25 cities within the United States organizing and implementing Comic Con Conventions. There are also plans to take the conventions abroad to China in 2016, a new venture which Simon was brought on board to work on.

Simon enjoys taking on new challenges and has become innovative by thinking outside the box, observing, asking questions, and paying attention to detail. Simon plans to work in event production for a few years, but his true passion is travel; cultural and adventure tourism, and continually expanding his horizons.

Samantha Lauver currently holds the position of Loyalty & Partnership Marketing Executive at the Minor Hotel Group at the company's corporate office located in Bangkok, Thailand. Since beginning her role in October 2013, Samantha has not only helped to launch the brand's loyalty programme, the Global Hotel Alliance (GHA) Discovery Programme, but has increased business profitability by introducing processes to improve the functionality of the programme along the way. On the partnership side of her role she focuses on developing relationships with both local and global airline, bank and credit card partners on behalf of three of the Minor Hotel Group brands.

Samantha completed her Senior Internship in the Maldives at Anantara's flagship property in the Maldives, Anantara Kihavah Villas, during the resort's pre-opening stages where she held the position of Sales & Public Relations Coordinator. After 15 months in the Maldives Samantha returned to Thailand in 2012 as the Elephant Polo Assistant Manager for the annual Minor Hotel Group charity event held in Hua Hin, Thailand. During her time in Asia she has also completed a Front Office Management Training Program, Sales & Marketing Management Training Program and Public Relations Internship with Anantara Hotels, Resorts & Spas.

Samantha graduated with her Bachelors in Tourism and Hospitality Management from Temple University in 2011.
Struggles Facing the NFL Moving to London
By: Colin McKay

The NFL, going to London has failed in recent years when trying to market its brand throughout London. In the late 80’s when teams came over to London to play, the anticipated excitement died down and the live events were a bust. As the NFL seeks to move towards building a franchise in London – it must be answered whether or not the league has the capacity to do so. A major challenge for the league is transitioning the NFL brand as well as the talented personnel, both on and off the field, in a smooth manner. Furthermore, time changes and rigorous travel schedules would hinder the day-to-day operations of teams and the league as one. Long-term solutions such as financing a stadium or finding the right venue to house both an NFL team and an English Premier League squad must be taken into account. Despite Wembley Stadium hosting NFL games annually since 2007 accommodating a full NFL schedule would be very difficult since they would overlap with English soccer games. Beyond the logistics, the NFL has yet to determine whether or not they can establish themselves as a major player in the professional sports industry in London. The NFL may face issues with establishing a large, consistent market in London because there is not a national passion for the sport, much less any chance for the nation to participate at a grassroots level. The NFL must make a huge marketing push to determine if English fans are ready to value NFL football almost as much as soccer.

The NFL believes that expanding to London will allow for tens of millions more viewers and yield a high return on corporate sponsorship revenue. The quick, exponential growth of the league and the potential for further expansion is very tempting for the league but will be very difficult without losing share of the U.S. market. The opportunity for growth has the league seeing dollar signs across the Atlantic. Currently, sponsors in London are chomping at the bits to be a part of a possible NFL expansion. In 5 years, the International series has garnered 21 brands via 18 companies for 2014, up from just 7 partners in 2009. The International Series has been a huge marketing tool for the NFL to help spread the game throughout Europe. Studies have shown that fans have increased engagement and interest in the NFL during the year since being played in London. However, despite increasing interest, the NFL must go above and beyond if they would like to steal market share.

The biggest underlying issue with the NFL seeking to expand into London would have to be that there is in fact, a stable market in London for the NFL. With their hearts focused on soccer and namely the English Premier League, the NFL would not only have to draw-in those more unfamiliar with football than, per se, your average American, but also target efforts at stealing some of the market share away from soccer.

In closing, the opportunity to expand the NFL into London as a full-time gig seems like a worthwhile endeavor at first glance, financially speaking. The ability to grow market share internationally would be unprecedented in the professional sports industry. However, once you think logistics, it immediately becomes apparent that there is no way the NFL could operate efficiently by adding a team in London.

The Takeover: Rise of East Asian Hospitality Management
By: Adam Howell

American and European hotel management companies have new competitors that ensure a run for theirmoney. New companies have started emerging in Eastern Asia and Southeast Asia, and are beginning to dominate regional hospitality, with intentions of expanding globally. As the industry begins to focus on more management companies and less on branded chains, three East Asian companies have taken charge of their national markets. These emerging companies; HTM Management Company, Minor Hotel & Restaurant Group, and Onyx Hospitality, have created targeted advertising and management styles which reflect the sensibilities of different Asian cultures.

HTM, based in Vietnam, serves the Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam regions, while Minor is predominately in Thailand, Bali, the Maldives and Sri Lanka and finally Onyx Hospitality has developed a strong brand portfolio which can be found all around the Indian Ocean. Many of these organizations are understanding the key principles to developing infrastructure, securing agreements, and developing a cohesive brand identity, leading to rapid expansion and niche offerings. These new companies have identified the need for international brand fluidity while remaining localized in its amenities and offerings.

Domestic and Western companies, such as Starwood, must be aware of this emerging trend, as they have begun to pursue opportunities in India and Southeast Asia. In order to compete, Western management companies must begin to develop a greater understanding of localized needs in Eastern Asia and begin to accommodate to those needs and better serve unique cultures.

Space Travel
By: Alicia Carey

Virgin Galactic, the world’s first commercial spaceline, is working to develop a space vehicle that is “designed to reach an altitude that exceeds NASA’s definition of space and earns customers official astronaut status”. When talking with Virgin Galactic, passengers will not only be able to experience the unique experience of travelling in outer space with incredible views of Earth below but also will have the opportunity to leave their seats and float in zero-gravity for a few minutes. The price for this extraordinary experience is $250,000 per person. There are more than seven hundred people already signed up for a flight including Justin Bieber, Leonardo DiCaprio, Tom Hanks, and Angelina Jolie. Although this list shows that their target market is mainly those with considerable wealth, Virgin Galactic has opened up a way to travel that people may have never thought was possible. The company plans to go forward with launches once they fully believe it is safe to do.

Yet, a major setback in their plans occurred on October 31, 2014 when SpaceShipTwo, Virgin Galactic’s primary space vehicle, crashed during a test flight and killed co-pilot Michael Alsbury. Although the accident is still under investigation, this tragedy is bound to impact the future of space tourism. From now on, there will be changes made to ensure the safety of this type of travel. Even more importantly, tourists may now fear travelling into space. However, Virgin Galactic founder and British entrepreneur, Richard Branson believes that “the risk is worth it” and has stated that the company would still “love to finish what we started”. He vows to continue pursuing the idea of commercial spaceflight and is determined to find out what went wrong, learn from it, and move forward. Although the future of space tourism may be uncertain right now, it will be interesting to see if and when this new form travel will take off.
Data Overload: Big Data and Analytics in Sport
By: Derek Kemmerer

The sport industry is entering an era where it will never be the same, and the foundation for this new era is the recent rapid advances in technological capability. This new era for the sport industry will be one of “big data” and analytics which will forever revolutionize the way sport organizations operate. This revolution will be felt from the executives down to the players in sport organizations. 

Merely 15 years ago it would have been impressive to create data on hundreds of consumers and only a few of their consumer preferences or consumption tendencies. Flash forward to today, organizations now have access to tens of thousands of consumers and the majority of their preferences. Although this ambitious data mining and analyzing began in the corporate sector of business, it has naturally trickled down to the sport industry, and it has started to affect every aspect of sport organizations all around the world.

Sport organizations are now collecting and analyzing data on fans, tickets, and players. Sport organizations now have the ability to target consumer segments with marketing in a much more cost effective way, and they have much more information on consumers which allows them to segment consumers more effectively. Organizations have data on ticketing that enable them to change the prices based on the small fluctuations in the market, and they are able to maximize their revenue through these price variations. Finally, they are able to assess player talent and production in ways they used to only dream about. The 2014 FIFA World Cup winners, Germany, used big data and analytics on player biometrics and movements during training to determine who the most efficient players were. This helped them field the most productive and efficient team which propelled them to win the World Cup.

These analyses are just the beginning, and there is no telling how far big data and analytics can be taken in the sport industry. The amount of data teams and organizations have access to is only going to grow, and people will become more efficient handling that data. This will make it imperative that organizations are proactive and make investment in big data and analytics a priority. If they do not do this, these organizations will not be able to compete in the industry anymore.

Georgian Tourism Development
By: Givi Bitsadze

Located between the mountains of Caucasus and the Black Sea, Georgia is a small eastern European nation with rich ancient historical culture. Georgia is often referred to as the crossroads of Europe and Asia with its unqiue location attracts many travelers from around the globe. Georgia started to develop tourism infrastructure in the last few years and tourism has been gradually growing as the number of visitors has increased from 1 to some 3 million travelers in the last five years. The Georgian govern-ment’s efforts to boost tourism index had paid off and country has seen growth in tourism revenue. Georgia is drawing the attention of travelers who are adventurous and willing to expect the unexpectable. Another attraction for guest to enjoy and experience real Georgian wine making traditions.

High tops of Caucasian mountains are the destination for snow lovers, as the prices are half of those in the European Alps, and they offer the same quality of snow during winter season. Gudauri, Bakuriani and Mestia are the places to go for advanced snow lovers. Modern infrastructure and easy access with affordable prices make these destinations a great spot for Ski lovers. Visitors from around the word arrive at Tbilisi International Airport (IATA: TBS), which is currently served by major European and Middle-Eastern airlines, as well as nations flag carrier –Georgian Air-ways, offering daily and weekly non-stop services to European capitals. Along with Tbilisi International Airport, the country is also accessible through Batumi International Airport (IATA: BUS), located in the coastal city Batumi, a popular spot for vacationers who are looking for a getaway from the hot sum-mer, enjoying beach and vibrant nightlife.

Budget traveler's visiting from Europe have an opportunity to fly in Kutaisi David Aghamshebeli Airport (DATA: KUT). This airport is served by the European low-cost carrier -WizzAir and offers daily non-stop flights to major European cities. A plan to increase tourism in Georgia is the number one priority for the Georgian National Tourism Agency. With efforts from the local government and international investors, this country is looking forward to international fame.

Cloud Control
By: Lisa Williams

With the winning bid to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup, Qatar is getting prepared by creating something new and innovative to ease the comfort of the summer heat for those attending and participating in the World Cup games. Qatar scientists have come up with the idea of an artificial cloud, which will be controlled by a remote, that will hover above the stadium to keep the sun out and temperatures cool. In the summer months in Qatar, temperatures can reach a high of 122 Degrees Fahrenheit. The heat can create hazardous conditions for not only players who are compet- ing, but also for the fans that attend the tournament and the staff that will be working the tournament. Qatar plans to air condition their World Cup stadium using solar power. The ‘clouds’ that have been designed can be produced at a cost of $500,000 each (Stanglin, 2011). Saud Abdul Ghani, the head of the mechanical and industrial engineer- ing department at the University of Qatar, said the ‘clouds’ are made from a lightweight carbon structure, and carry a giant envelope of material containing helium gas (Stanglin, 2011). Through a remote control, four solar-powered engines will move the structure. Although it seems as though Qatar has solved the issue of the heat, the Global Players‘ Football Union backed a switch of the tournament to winter months, stating that the Gulf country ‘does not provide suitable conditions for a festival of football such as the World Cup’ (Stanglin, 2011). It will be interesting to see how this project unfolds and if Qatar will be able to produce working ‘clouds’ by the start of the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

Could the NHL Cut ties with the Olympics?
By: Sean Bastian

Olympic hockey is one of the most exciting events in sport. Players gather from all over the world to play the game they love and repres- ent their country with pride. It is undoubtedly the greatest competition possible. The best players in the world take part in a 12 day tournament and compete for the ultimate goal, a gold medal. With that being said, we could see some significant changes to the games moving forward. The NHL has not committed to sending its players to any future Olympic Games. Sources say that it is unlikely the league will be a part of the 2018 Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea. During the last five years, the benefits for the NHL to participate have diminished. The league had a desire for global exposure two decades ago and with its involvement in the Olympics, it has achieved that. In the 1990s, the NHL had become so irrelevant that many called NASCAR the fourth major sport in the United States. At that point they saw the Olympics as a way to get back on the map. One of the major concerns from a league standpoint is that they have to take off three weeks during their season to participate in the Olympics. No other sport has to do this and many of the team owners are against this. Philadelphia Flyers owner Ed Snider told the Philadelphia Daily News, ”It's ridiculous to take three weeks off in the middle of the season. How can anybody be happy breaking up the season? No other league does it, why should we? There's no benefit whatsoever” (Portzline, 2014). In addition the three week hiatus the league must take, there are other significant reasons why the league would not want to participate. The main one being injuries. An owner's worst nightmare is that one of the team’s star players gets injured while they are not even playing for their team. When the league and the owners do not see the benefit of competing in the Olympics, the players value it just as much as they do playing in the NHL. North American players believe that going for gold is a big deal. Blues coach, an assistant for Team Canada said, "The tournaments are so different that I think they put them in different places, emotionally. But the kid that grew up dream- ing of holding the Stanley Cup over his head .... now he has to wear a gold medal just as badly. It's changed, absolutely" (Portzline, 2014). Moving forward there are obvious arguments on both sides debating the essential question, should the NHL participate in the Olympic Games? The players want the opportunity to represent their country and win a gold medal. The league does not want to take a three week break during the heart of their season and risk players getting injured. No matter what happens it will be a historic and heated debate as the 2018 Games approach.

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Newsletter Committee Mission

To inform and influence the undergraduate community in the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management of the trends and developments of the industry and the unique perspectives of Montague-Ridall & Associates.

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