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The Rise of Hospitality-Driven Workspaces: Why the Best Offices Now Feel Like Hotels

SPEAKERS

Michael Aldridge
CEO & Founder
KOFISI

OVERVIEW

In this deep-dive session at FHS World 2026, Michael Aldridge, founder and CEO of KOFISI, made the case for 'hotelification' — the deliberate application of hospitality principles to the design, service, and management of commercial workspaces. Aldridge argued that the shared workspace market is maturing into a third-generation model that prioritises experience as much as function, and that organisations are increasingly treating workspace as a service rather than a fixed asset. Drawing on KOFISI's position as the largest managed workspace provider in Africa, with over one million square feet under management and expansion underway in Dubai and Riyadh, he outlined how customised enterprise space, intentional design, multi-outlet food and beverage, wellness, and deeply trained hospitality teams combine to drive what he calls 'hyper productivity'. The session was notable for bridging two worlds — hospitality and real estate — and presenting a compelling investment thesis built on high occupancy, long-term contracts, and EBITDA margins north of 45–50%.

KEY THEMES

- Hotelification: applying hospitality thinking to workspace design and service
- Workspace as a service rather than a fixed corporate asset
- Productivity versus efficiency as the core value proposition
- Intentional design, localisation, and multi-use amenities
- People and training as competitive differentiators in workspace hospitality
- Investment thesis: occupancy certainty, long-term contracts, and high margins

TAKEAWAYS

- Treat workspace as a service, not an asset — organisations that outsource to specialist operators gain flexibility, cost efficiency, and access to hospitality-grade experience without distraction from their core business.
- Hotelification is a replicable model: concierge reception, multi-outlet F&B including desk room service, wellness facilities, events spaces, and engaged service teams can all be transposed from hotels into offices.
- Good and bad design cost the same — the differentiator is deliberate thought about patterns, themes, sound, localisation, and how people will actually move through and use a space.

- Invest heavily in people: KOFISI's hospitality academy in Africa demonstrates that consistent, hotel-standard service in a workspace context requires structured training, not assumption — especially when clients stay for five years, not one night.
- The business model is structurally resilient: long-term enterprise contracts (often 10,000+ sq ft) provide occupancy visibility that hotels cannot match, supporting EBITDA margins of 45–50% and performance through both up and down economic cycles.
- Expand the definition of the target customer: enterprises, embassies, and multinational organisations making workspace decisions from central offices in the US, Europe, and Asia represent a large, underpenetrated demand pool for premium managed workspace.

QUOTES

"Service in a workspace just puts the lights on. Hospitality in a workspace helps you shine the light on your idea."

— **Michael Aldridge, CEO & Founder, KOFISI**

"One thing we say about design is that the thing that good and bad design have in common is they cost the same amount of money."

— **Michael Aldridge, CEO & Founder, KOFISI**

"Productivity is defined as getting more from the same. It's not efficiency which is the same from less. Productivity is ultimately the drive."

— **Michael Aldridge, CEO & Founder, KOFISI**

"We're like a hotel but we're better. We're better because we're way more efficient. We're better because we know what our occupancy is every day when we come in."

— **Michael Aldridge, CEO & Founder, KOFISI**