

ATM SPECIAL

TTN

Budget
 Car Rental ISO 9001 Certified
 Serious about saving money
 For Reservations
DUBAI Tel: 00971 4 291
 or book on-line
www.budget-uae.com

A component of www.TTN.com

www.ttnworldwide.com

• Volume 24 • Issue 5 • May 2006 • Reg

inside

Jet-fuelled growth

Even as it invests across the world, regionalises its travel agency and opens an events arm, uniquely, Dnata faces the problem of zero commissions just like as everyone else, Gary Chapman tells **JONNA SIMON**



Off to ATM 4

GROUND handlers, flight caterers, travel agents, tour operators, aviation software experts, Dnata is all that and more. Established in 1959 with a staff of five to provide ground handling services at Dubai International Airport, it is one of the largest travel organisations in the Middle East now, with a staff of over 6,200.

Even as Middle Eastern airlines are set to double capacity over the next five years, and Emirates Airline in particular aims for a spot at the top, Dnata, which is wholly owned by the government of Dubai, isn't simply aboard the Dubai carrier for the ride, but is pursuing an independent expansion and investment strategy.

Excerpts from an interview with Dnata president Gary Chapman:

As president of the Emirates Group Services and Dnata Agencies you have an extremely broad area of responsibilities focussing on the airlines, what would you say are the main challenges in the years ahead? Is it the rising cost of jet fuel? The rate of expansion? Or something else?

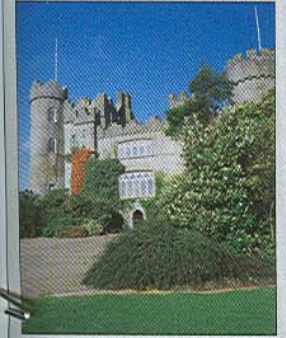
Our main challenge in the future will be to continue running the business with our present standards and efficiency. Managing business growth effectively opens up other areas such as maintaining standards and quality, how to sustain the efficiency of the operation, so we can continue to

compete effectively. At the moment, Dubai is experiencing a boom period, but even if a downturn occurs, we're well placed to retain our market share.

Can you briefly touch on the future paths of the departments under your jurisdiction such as finance, IT and human resources?

These are all group departments supporting the airline and all our other services, primarily Dnata. With the airline, we have a long-term plan in place, that will probably change over time. We are fully aware of this and everyone and everything in the group is geared to support the businesses we operate. We have looked at what the

Continued on Page 2



Dublin calling 57

'Demand will need to catch up with supply'

THE deal everyone in hotels is still talking about is Starwood's acquisition of Le Méridien, and what it means for the industry. Roeland Vos, president, Starwood Europe, Africa & Middle East, whose role includes directly overseeing the operation for around 270 hotels and resorts in 60 countries,

tells **TTN** how the deal plays out in the Middle East. Excerpts:

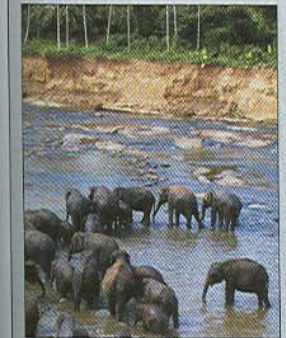
So what prompted the decision to take over Le Méridien and how will Starwood leverage that?

Starwood is a global multi-branded lifestyle company and adding a new brand to our portfolio presents tremendous opportunities for growth. It is an excellent strategic match and Le Méridien becomes the eighth brand in our portfolio alongside W, Sheraton, Westin, Four Points, St Regis, The Luxury Collection and

this brand and grow it globally. Le Méridien has a portfolio of more than 120 luxury and upscale hotels in about 50 countries worldwide, mostly in the world's top cities and resorts throughout Europe, Asia Pacific, Africa and the Middle East. This provides a complementary footprint to Starwood's existing brands as well as a new presence in several key markets, especially Europe, Africa and the Middle East. This adds nearly 90 hotels, giving us a total of around 270 hotels in this division. Additionally, Le Méridien's strong European customer base complements

Talking Mergers

by **Keith J Fernandez**



Paradise in Sri Lanka .. 68

Jordan 60
 Oman 64
 IMEX 72
 Airlines 75

Tall buildings

tourism
 DESPITE the Middle East still has a reputation as a tourist hot spot, Hans Brajer, president of Total Identity, says "Apart from the region is a 'dangerous' perception with a high exposure, visit to the region of the company based agency. The Gulf region with market development. "Tall buildings