Standard Stands Together

Yesterday was a sad day. We made the unavoidable decision to close our two New York City hotels, The Standard High Line and The Standard East Village, The Standard Miami and our first international hotel, The Standard London. It was gut wrenching because hotels, and our hotels in particular, are anchors of their neighborhoods. Unlike restaurants, we never close. Ever. We are the places where people feel safe. Where people come together. To eat, drink, stay, play and enjoy each other's company. To live life to the fullest. Where locals mingle with visitors to our remarkable city. And where our staff makes it their job to take care of all who come, to welcome and delight them.

Our job is to make you happy. And we love to do it. In fact, we live to do it. Our livelihoods depend on making you happy.

Day in and day out, almost 17 million hospitality workers in this country (and some 266 million globally) take care of you. Housekeepers, front desk agents, concierges, bartenders, security guards, cooks, servers, bussers, maintenance crews. Many unseen, most uncelebrated. They work in a 24x7, 365 day a year. Nights, weekends, holidays. Always. All the while smiling. Because this business attracts people that love to take care of people. That is why I love it. And they are why I do what I do. And that is why I am writing this.

One of our team members reached out to Amber Asher, the President of our company a few days ago. To remind us that in times of trouble, The Standard always helps our local communities. Whether the East Village explosion, Chelsea pipe bomb or the California wild fires. It's true. And I loved that helping the community during this crisis was his first thought. It speaks volumes to me about the culture of The Standard. But my only response to him was, "I wish we could do something, but this time, we are the community in need."

This time we need to be taken care of, by *you*. Today, by *you*, our government. Tomorrow, by *you*, our guests. Will you allow us to cash in the loyalty points *we* have earned?

Despite the big brand names you see, most hotels are owned by small companies or individuals. Hotels are operations that employ lots of people. They have very high fixed costs to operate, and competition is severe. Profit margins are thin, and have been getting thinner even before this crisis. What that means is modest drops in revenue from things like weather hurt profits. Big drops like the financial crisis, bite hard. Epic drops like the past week, kill. As Arne Sorensen, CEO of Marriott, said in his beautiful message to employees, "Covid-19 is having a more severe and sudden financial impact on our business than 9/11 an the 2009 financial crisis combined." We simply cannot pay all of our staff if we have no guests.

Our employees, like many others in the service industry, tend to live paycheck to paycheck. Most are hourly, often relying on tips. Many are immigrants without family infrastructure here. Few have savings. Most will not be able to pay rent next month. Without relief, many will leave our cities in a few months altogether.

The government needs to step in now for them to survive on a human level, and for us to be able to reopen when this crisis subsides. This past week the UK government announced measures to cover 80% of employee wages for businesses forced to shut down because of the Covid-19. Our government should follow suit with

similar quick, clear, decisive action. If they do not, not only will the personal family tragedies be severe, our ability to reopen our hotels for our communities when this subsides will be impaired.

When, god willing, we do reopen, we also need you, our guests, to step back in. Through our doors. To bring back the spirit of travel, exploration and adventure that makes life richer. The human connections that make life worth living. That bring us closer together in this, more obviously than ever, interconnected world.

Today, Amber announces Standard Stands Together, an employee relief fund she led the creation of to support our employees displaced by the crisis.

What do you say, can we cash in some of the loyalty points *we* have earned?

Amar Lalvani, CEO
Standard Hotels

The Standard Stands Together Relief Fund:
https://www.gofundme.com/f/the-standard-stands-together-relief-fund