

**HOTEL NEWS**

# Pro-invest and Next Story launch joint hospitality group Vista

by **Ruth Hogan**  
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Next Story Group Chairman, Patrick Imbardelli, Vista Hospitality Group Chair, Tony Ryan, and Pro-invest Group's Deputy Chair and Co-CEO, Jan Smits

Pro-invest and Next Story Group have joined forces to establish a new management company, Vista Hospitality Group Australasia.

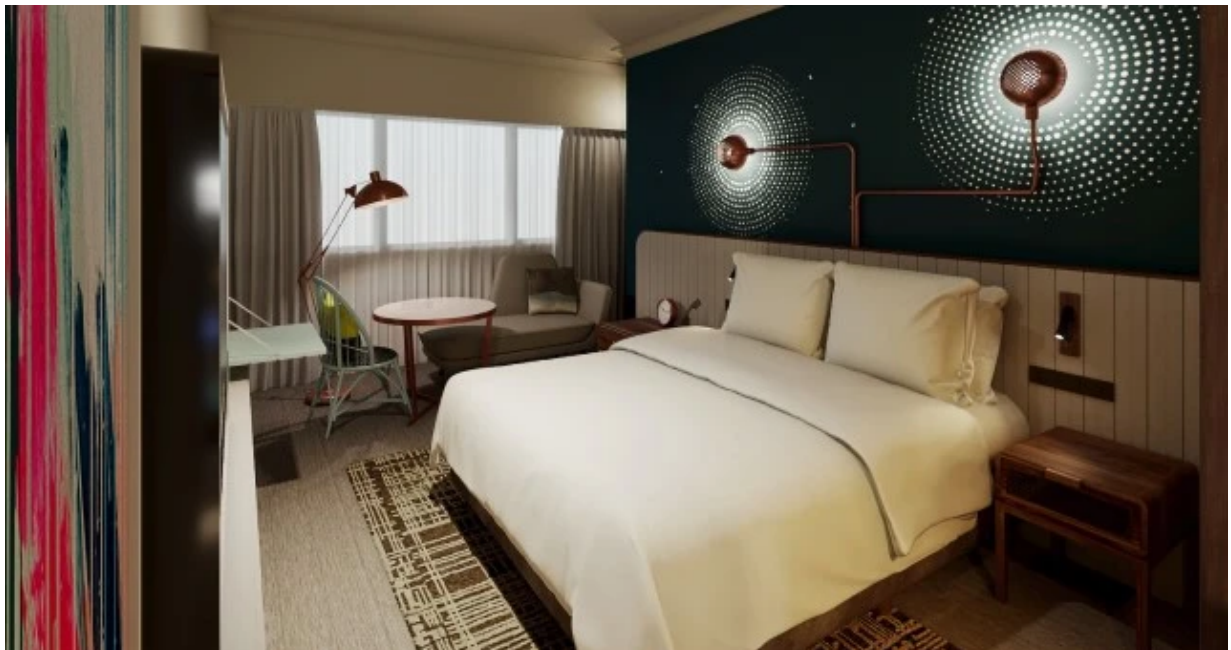
Combining seven hotel brands, 11 properties and over 700 staff, the joint venture will utilise expertise from both businesses to offer a suite of hospitality resources.

The services offered through this “one-stop shop” model will include development planning and asset management, franchising and revenue generation modelling, as well as tailored hotel operations for owners and partners.

“Pro-invest Group’s investment in this region means we’re strategically well placed to bring this exciting partnership to fruition with Next Story Group to own a new space in the market,” said Pro-invest Group Founder Chairman and CEO, Ronald Barrott.

“By leveraging our commercially driven revenue platforms and leading ESG practices, together with white label opportunities and combined brands and resources means we’ve created a dynamic new offering for owners and partners and a platform for the next phase of growth in Australia and New Zealand.”

Pro-invest Group is Asia Pacific’s largest hotel investment and acquisition business with \$2 billion worth of assets including the Sebel, voco, Holiday Inn Express, Hotel Indigo and Kimpton brands.



Hotel Indigo Brisbane

Vista Hospitality Group Australasia Chairman, Tony Ryan, is confident that the joint venture will offering something new in the market.

“We begin this new hospitality management group as market leaders from day one from a foundation of unrivalled industry expertise and a shared culture of excellence,” Ryan said.

“By bringing a new approach to delivering operational advantages, responsible returns, optimisation of assets and scale, we’re confident in our goal to be the region’s first choice for hotel owners, partners and colleagues.”

The Vista Group portfolio will include Next Group’s Next, Ink, Sage and Country Comfort brands, as well as Pro-invest’s Sebel, voco and Hotel Indigo brands.

Next Story Group Chairman, Patrick Imbardelli, said Vista has the advantage of having a dynamic range of brands, from mid-market to luxury, and the versatility to work with global hotel brands in a white label approach not yet offered in this region.

“It not only presents a strong platform for further expansion at a pivotal time for this region’s hotel industry, but importantly the opportunity for our collective teams of hospitality experts around Australia and New Zealand to grow and develop,” Imbardelli said.

## **Growth plans**

Launching with over 1500 rooms, Vista Hospitality Group has ambitious growth plans to expand that figure to 5000 rooms across Australia and New Zealand in the next five years, with further signings to be announced this financial year.

“We can operate under our own brands, we can take opportunities, mainly management contracts, and operate under international brands, so [this joint venture] gives a wide [range] of services that we can deliver,” Pro-invest Group’s Deputy Chair & Co-CEO, Jan Smits, told *HM*.

Smits pointed to Ink, Next and Country Comfort as key brands for growth.

“We like the Ink brand, and we look forward to growing that,” Smits told *HM* exclusively.



Ink Hotel Melbourne

“One of the classic brands in the portfolio is Country Comfort. Historically, Country Comfort, in its heyday, had 80/90 hotels in Australia, so we really look forward to reestablishing that brand. The Next brand is an opportunity too.”

Pro-invest will also bring its ESG capabilities to the new joint venture, with plans for hotels to adopt reusable and recyclable materials, become energy efficient and better manage water usage and waste, Smits explained.

“In the Pro-invest portfolio, all the assets are 4.5/5-star NABERS rated and that very much underpins our beliefs both for our customers and our investors,” Smits told *HM*.

“We now look forward to growing that into brands like Ink and Next as we expand these brands in the future.”