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There seems to be an increasing demand for building conversions into hotels in mature markets such as Europe and the United States.

Old or partially protected assets are ideal targets for boutique operators that are capable of extracting the unique personality of each building. Mainstream operators have product standards too strict for buildings that were not meant to be hotels in the first place.

However, when it comes to selecting and lining up the best candidates to operate these extraordinary properties, owners are limited by the geographical scope of boutique operators. Most of these management companies are local or regional at best. Very few wish to work on international opportunities and therefore benefit from the network synergies of international travel dynamics.

In my view, a boutique approach to hotel management and the capability to work across different countries should not be mutually exclusive. Clearly there is a market for a global network of boutique hotels. For now it is being filled in by mainstream operators to some extent, but more so by the likes of Design Hotels, Epoque Hotels, Chic Retreats, Hotique, Lifestyle Hotels, Mr & Ms Smith, SLHW, etc.

Are there any boutique operators taking a global approach to hotel development?

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