

HYB26

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The Anti-Strategy Strategy: How Doing Less Will Win 2026

Commercial strategy

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Les Roches

Julia Krebs, Senior Lecturer and Hospitality Consultant at Les Roches Marbella, argues that the stand-out hotels of 2026 will be the ones that dare to do less, not more. Her “anti-strategy” swaps add-ons and AI hype for staff-led revenue insight, fixing basic integrations, owning slow days like Tuesday, and turning the luxury of less into a clear commercial advantage.

While everyone's chasing AI and adding amenities, the winners of 2026 will be doing the opposite. They'll be carefully subtracting, not adding. Listening, not automating. I have spent years watching hotels make the same expensive mistakes. Adding the same "innovative" features and buying the same "revolutionary" technology. In short, following the same "best practices." The future of commercial strategy isn't in what you add. It's in what you have the courage to remove, ignore or completely reimagine.

POINT 1: THE HUMAN-FIRST REVOLUTION

Your operations staff knows more about revenue than your RMS, empower them through a “Staff Insight Council”. These are the people who understand your channels, your partnerships and even more your real competitive position. So let them have voice in strategic decisions.

THE APPROACH IN 2026: CREATE STAFF REVENUE BOARDS

- Which rooms guests actually request and when?
- Why do direct bookings fail at the last second?
- What amenities get refilled and requested the most (high value) vs. ignored and are untouched (worthless)?

POINT 2: THE ANTI-AI ADVANTAGE

The State of Distribution report showed us that hotels are drowning in complexity. Multiple systems that don't talk. Manual processes eating 40% of the work week with teams that shrink while challenges multiply. AI ranked last, behind everything else. What is the key action you must take before venturing into an AI application for your hotel: Integration. Making existing systems actually talk to each other.

IN 2026, FIX YOUR BASICS BEFORE YOU TOUCH AI. HERE'S A PRIORITY LIST:

1. Connect your existing systems (PMS to RMS to CRS to CRM)
2. Automate the mind-numbing stuff (parity checking, report generation, rate loading)
3. Clean your data (your PMS has too many inactive rate codes)

POINT 3: THE TUESDAY TEST

If you can't fill Tuesday, you don't have a strategy? Every hotel can fill Saturday night. Your revenue culture reveals itself on slow days. Do you panic and discount? Do you close outlets? Or do you see opportunity? A boutique hotel in Bern created "Midnight Rates", giving 30% off if you book after 10PM for arrival on the same night. Why not make Tuesday the "Local Hero Day", everything priced for locals, not tourists.

BUILD YOUR ENTIRE STRATEGY AROUND YOUR “TUESDAY”:

- If it works on Tuesday, it works every day. Price Tuesday for value, not desperation
- Create Tuesday-specific experiences that don't exist on weekends
- Measure Tuesday loyalty (guests who choose you on slow days are your real supporters)
- Staff your best people on Tuesday (that's when creativity matters most)

POINT 4: THE LUXURY OF LESS

Every hotel is adding the same amenities: Spa = "wellness tourism", Co-working space = "bleisure market" and a Rooftop bar = "local experience". You're not diversifying your offers. Stop asking "What else can we offer?". Start asking "What can we stop doing that nobody will miss?". The real innovations are in subtraction, like at [La Moraleja](#), The Quiet Hotel, in Mallorca: Digital and noise detox, no music, no TVs and no small talk. Because sometimes luxury is the absence of something.

THE 2026 UNBUNDLING:

1. Remove three things before adding one
2. Track what guests DON'T miss to book
3. Find one problem nobody else will solve and build your entire identity around that solution

2026 COMMERCIAL STRATEGY RECAP

Commercial success won't come from doing more of what everyone else does. It will come from having the courage to do less, but doing it extraordinarily well. It's focus and choosing to be irreplaceable at a few things rather than mediocre at everything. Because 2026 can bring success for hospitality businesses that build a network with local partners, acting as the facilitator that directs guests to outstanding experiences whether these are created in-house or off-property. These are hotels that have the courage to subtract and the patience to perfect each daily interaction. The question isn't whether you'll adapt...The question is whether you'll lead or follow. Your Tuesday depends on it.

