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Zuri recasts its hotels, plans more launches

Our Bureau
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Hotels group Zuri has recast its six properties into three niche brands and says it plans to add 10-15 hotels globally, either as new hotels or through management contracts in the next five years.

Zuri Group Global, which started building its own luxury brand two years ago, would invest an estimated Rs 500 crore on two or three new hotels planned in the country. It was discussing with many players in different places, including in Bangalore, for taking up existing properties on management basis and rebranding them as Zuri, its Managing Directors, Mr Bobby Kamani and Mr Abhishek Kamani, told a news conference on Wednesday.

“We have a multi-pronged strategy to expand our operations. After setting up Greenfield projects, we are also looking at inorganic growth through management contracts,” Mr Abhishek Kamani said. “We are in advanced stages of talks with a few private owners in the southern and eastern markets [for management contracts]. We are still not present in key markets such as Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai.”

May tap markets

The group, with a fiscal 2009-10 turnover of Rs 250 crore, may tap the public issue route or private equity players to raise part of the funds and the plans were at an early stage, Mr Abhishek Kamani said. It has invested Rs 750 crore so far on existing businesses.

Mr Bobby Kamani said the profile of the hotel planned near the Devanahalli airport was being decided while another premium hotel in Nairobi would start shortly. Other locations in Africa, West Asia and India were being considered.

He said, “We have taken a rather bold step to restructure our hospitality business at this early stage. While several brands have adopted this approach at an advanced stage of their existence in the market, we believe a restructuring at this stage will definitely help build a strong identity for our guests.... Considering the dynamic nature of our industry today, we are required to compete in the global marketplace which demands bolder and clearer brands.”

The six properties would be branded as premium Platinum, the intermediate Lifestyle and the more affordable family category of Comfort, according to Ms Priti Chand, Assistant Vice-President, PR & Communications.



Zuri has a business hotel in the IT hub of Whitefield here; a resort and spa in Kumarakom, Kerala; the White Sands Resort and Casino and the Portuguese style Retreat, both in Goa; it has one in the UK and a beach resort in Mombasa, Kenya.

Domestic operations account for Rs 100 crore of the turnover.

Ms Chand said Zuri was increasing the focus on online promotions. "A large amount of our spend is going into online marketing and social media. We are going to manage it better," she said.