

Sommet Education acquires majority stake of Invictus Education

Swiss-based Sommet Education has announced its acquisition of a majority stake in Invictus Education, alongside Invictus' historical shareholders, as it looks to continue its expansion strategy and consolidate its status as a leading network in hospitality education.



With this acquisition, Sommet Education will effectively double its worldwide footprint, increasing its global number of campuses from nine to 17, and increasing its capacity from 6,000 to 9,000 students.

Sommet Education CEO Benoît-Etienne Domenget, noted, “The Sommet Education growth strategy leverages on acquisitions of local, regional and international hospitality education brands as well as adjacent and complementary business lines. Together with Invictus Education Group we will accelerate our development plan in Africa aiming for 20 campuses throughout Africa in the medium-term.”

Having trained and educated over 50,000 students and employees in accredited programmes, since its inception in 2014, Invictus Education Group is a leading South African private education and training provider which delivers diversified education and training in Hospitality, Culinary Arts, Gaming, Retail Food Services and Creative Media. The Group facilitates learning across eight national campuses as well as hosting online learning platforms both in South Africa and Australia. The Invictus Education Group comprises four brands, including the well-known International Hotel School

(‘IHS’), IHS Gaming, Summit and SAE Institute Africa.

Invictus Founder and CEO, Mike Lambert comments: “Our approach is very much experiential focused, educating and training our students to be ‘job-ready’ upon graduation. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown in March 2020, 93% of IHS students were employed upon graduation.”

Sommet Education is a global leader in higher education in hospitality and culinary arts schools offering accredited degrees through a combination of experiential and theory-based learning. The group boasts three international campuses, including hospitality schools at the Glion Institute of Higher Education and Les Roches Global Hospitality Education. In 2019, the group successfully acquired iconic École Ducasse, a culinary and pastry arts school and developed its network most recently in Thailand through a strategic partnership with Nai Lert Group. The group currently spans across 9 campuses in 5 countries, including Switzerland, France, Spain, UK, China.

The alliance will share knowledge and experience of the two education groups and leverage synergies that will enable further academic curriculum development to support the expansion of Invictus Bachelor’s Degree on which Glion Institute of Higher Education and Les Roches have built their reputation. The IHS will benefit from the development of the Culinary and Pastry Arts portfolio of programs relying on the know-how of École Ducasse. Sommet Education will benefit from the success story of Summit via its 220 accredited corporate training programs and its unique online delivery platform utilizing technology to decrease time out of the workplace to study.

Local expansion

Together, Sommet Education and Invictus Education Group plan to develop additional campuses for the IHS and one

additional SAE Institute. The first project, located in Benoni, is already in construction, and is due to open in July this year. It will be followed in 2022 by other campuses in Mbombela (formerly Nelspruit), Potchefstroom, Gqeberha (formally Port Elizabeth) and Pretoria.

On the occasion of the signing, Benoît-Etienne Domenget commented: “Invictus Education Group is an amazing success story in the African education landscape. With a 25-year history on the continent, a diverse portfolio of hospitality education institutions, a very strong digital program portfolio, a highly experienced team and robust management, a national footprint and a strong pipeline, Invictus has the potential to further carry all our ambitions in the region and into the rest of Africa.”

Lambert concludes: “Sommet Education is the international partner we need to support our vision and expansion plan, which can now be accelerated across South Africa and sub-Saharan Africa. This alliance also means that we will be able to provide our students with access to a worldwide network of alumni and industry partners with diversified learning paths and careers, with even more opportunities to learn and thrive internationally. I look forward to joining the Sommet Education Executive Committee as CEO of Invictus. ”

Ambitious developments are being targeted for Africa, with the first campus opening in Kenya already scheduled for 2023.

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