



CHOICE HOTELS INTERNATIONAL

ELFA ROA Franchisee Associations

Spring 2008

President Message to ELFA: Focusing on Our Progress

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It is my honor to announce that this year is the 35th anniversary of ELFA! We will be celebrating this occasion in Las Vegas this May. We have come far in the past 35 years and continue to work hard to achieve further success in the future.

I would like to discuss the current hot topic- re-imaging. Earlier this year, Ross had sent a fax to over 800 properties about re-imaging. However, we only received responses from 35 properties. This means that less than 5% of the total properties responded. These 35 properties were then involved in a conference call with the entire ELFA board concerning issues about re-imaging.

If you have any questions or concerns about re-imaging, please contact :

Jay Sigona at econolodgereimaging@choicehotels.com.

I am delighted to announce that the national multi-channel media campaign will begin to air this summer. Leonard, Natu, Alka, Kalpesh and I went to Silver Spring, MD in March 2008 to see the TV campaign. From this experience, we believe that this advertisement will allow the re-imaging of the sign to reach many of our guests and at the same time convey a "fresh" look for our Econo Lodge brand. The ad will be shown at our May convention.

I am also excited to discuss the Choice Privilege program that Econo Lodge has recently started using. This program allows guests to earn and redeem Choice Privilege points for their stay. If you have any questions concerning this program, please bring them to our membership meeting at convention.

Last but not least, we had a meeting on February 5th with Tim Shuy. We discussed fair franchising. On February 7th, ELFA and ROA went to AAHOA's office and discussed fair franchising with them as well.

Please join us on Tuesday May 6th at 11:30am for our Roundtable Discussions. There will be snacks available as well as you will be eligible for a drawing to win \$100.00 Cash!!! There are 5 chances to win.

Before I end this message, I would like to thank all of the members for their involvement in ELFA. In addition, if you would like to become a member or know someone else that does, please come by and visit us at the ELFA Roundtables at Convention where we will have applications available



Mahendra Patel
President
Econo Lodge Franchisee Association

for your convenience or visit us on our website at www.ELFA.org where you can download an application.

Thanks for your time and I hope to see you in Vegas!

Mahendra Patel

Message from the Rodeway President- Elections at Convention 2008



**Kay Collier- Pittman
President
Rodeway Owners Association**

Hello everyone! Is it Spring already? I am sure everyone's conversion to Choice Privilege, from the stamps has gone well. It is great to be able to give our Rodeway customers Choice Privilege points for their stay. They are appreciative that one program serves both Mid-scale and Economy Brands.

Convention is around the corner. We have 2 director positions up for election. Regions 2 and 4.

Rodeway Region 2: FL, GA, AL, MS, TN, KY, NC, SC and

Rodeway Region 4: AR, AZ, CA, CO, HI, LA, NM, NV, OK, TX, UT, WY

In Region 4 Neil Bahkta , current Region 4 Director is running for re-election and in Region 2 there is no current nominee.

A Director is a person with an ownership interest General Partner or Corporate Officer with effective control of a Rodeway Inn, that your hotel must be open and operating, that your hotel is in compliance with Choice Hotels International and has passed the last two QA inspections in order to qualify for a position on the Rodeway Owners Council. They would agree to 3 meetings a year, a meeting at Convention and your Fall Regional. We are a voice

that takes the concerns of our Franchises to Choice Corporate. Anyone who has an interest, please contact Ross Almo, Executive Director, Phone: 802-786-2260 and Email: econokillington@aol.com.

If you would like to talk about the Directors position, do not hesitate to call me at 865-453-2526 or Email :kaycdc@charterbn.com. Next year Regions 1 and 3 will be up for election. If you are in Regions 1 or 3, be ready to nominate or run for office next year.

I am looking forward to a great Convention this year. Rodeway will be 46 years old. Make plans to attend the Black and White Ball Celebration for the Economy Brands, Wednesday evening 5:45 p.m. – 7:45 p.m. before the Beach Party. Other dates and times to remember are Tuesday 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Roundtable Session, Rodeway and Econo Lodge; Wednesday 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Rodeway Owners Association Annual Membership meeting and Thursday 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Rodeway Inn Brand Session.

It is going to be a great Convention.

See you in Vegas!

Kay



**ROA
Regions**

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ELFA ELECTIONS at Convention By Leonard Richardson, ELFA past President

The Econo Lodge Franchisee Association will be holding elections for Directors in all even regions during this years Choice Hotels Convention in Las Vegas during our Roundtable meetings scheduled Tuesday, May 06, from 11:30 to 2:30. In accordance with the ELFA Bylaws, all those interested in running must:

- Own or manage an Econo Lodge in the Region they seek to represent.
- Have paid ELFA membership dues by April 1
- Must have been nominated on or before April 1
- Must be present during the Election

In the event there are no nominees for a Region prior to April 1, then the process is open to nominations up until immediately prior to the election for any candidate meeting the other qualifications.

Currently we have the following nominations:

- Region 2 : Manish Desai
- Region 4 : Kal Master
- Region 6 : Mike Adams
- Region 8 : Keyur Patel
- Region 10: Gary Koester
- Region 12: Open

If you are interested or know of someone who might be a good candidate, please contact Leonard Richardson at: L.RichardsonVB@gmail.com



Fall Regional Meetings 2008

By Leonard Richardson, ELFA Past President

Make your plans now to attend this year's Fall Regional Meetings. Listed here are the Final dates and locations for the 5 different sessions that will be held. As you are all aware, Fall Regionals are mandatory attendance meetings, but it is your option to come and learn something, or waste your time and money.

Please note the Change for Regions 4,5 and 6!!With all the changes in the Economy segment from re-imaging to new amenities, from EasyChoice to Choice Privileges, from the cigar box to ChoiceAdvantage, there are bound to be some great learning opportunities for everyone.

You will also have plenty of opportunity to socialize and network with you friends, vendors, and Choice Corporate staff.

Please watch the mail for your registration materials after Choice's Convention. Mark your calendars now; we'll be seeing you in Las Vegas in May!

- September 2-4 (Region 7&10) Fall Regional New Orleans, LA
- September 10-12 (Region 8&13) Fall Regional Milwaukee, WI
- September 21-23 (Region 4,5,6) Fall Regional Williamsburg, VA
- October 13-15 (Region 9,11,12) Fall Regional Scottsdale, AZ
- October 19-21 (Region 1,2,3) Fall Regional Jacksonville, FL

Alka Patel: Director for Region 5. Econo Lodge, Somers Point, New Jersey (NJ069)

I have been in the US since 1981. After moving to the US I went to high school in Jersey City, NJ. Then I attended Jersey City State College and graduated with a degree in Computer Science. During my college years I married to Bhavesh Patel and we have two beautiful children. In 1998 we had purchased a run down Knights Inn and renovated the entire property and re-flagged it as an Econo Lodge.

The Econo Lodge is a seasonal property at the Jersey Shore. Where we have built a very loyal repeat business. We purchased our second property, Ramada Inn in 2004 the third property, a Country Inn was purchased in 2005. I am a hands on operator of all 3 properties.

I have joined ELFA in May of 2007. It's been a privilege to be a part of ELFA Board and helping

ELFA members with any issues they would have. As a mother of two and operator of several properties I still see the value of participating on ELFA board and hopes to have our voice heard about the pros and cons of operating an Econo Lodge in today's changing business conditions. I am hoping my experience and success helps ELFA grow into a stronger organization.



Alka Patel- Region 5 ELFA Director

All Choice Brands, have made progress in the past year. With Choice Hotels we continue to work together to formulate success together.

New Rodeway Inns are being built with an increase in momentum, there are more properties, number of rooms and a higher ADR. Continued success of the Rodeway Inn product can be furthered with a flat franchise fee and fair terms in the franchise agreement.

Econo Lodge's continued growth with a slight increase in the average number of rooms per property, the quality of the properties are also improving --increasing the ADR slightly and the occupancy average. Econo Lodge has found formula for success

Yes we are going in the right direction-slowly, but positively we are making progress!

This Spring we will see an increase in advertising for the Economy brands. A unique TV advertisement will be undertaken which we have not seen in quite some time. Radio, print (magazines, newspapers, etc.) and online advertising will continue.

Bigger Payouts to Breakfast Bucks Participants

by Gary Bennett

Changes to program benefit Choice Owners and Managers

Choice would like to thank the property owners and general managers for their continued support and participation in the Breakfast Bucks program. We now have over 2,000 hotels receiving rebates from Choice qualified vendors. By year end, Choice properties received over \$200,000 in rebates through the Breakfast Bucks program. Despite its success, Choice sought to improve the Breakfast Bucks program to generate higher rebates to owners, and do so with more frequency.

In order to accomplish this we'd like to announce two exciting changes to the Breakfast Bucks program that began on April 1, 2008. 1. The quarterly rebates you receive from the qualified vendors participating in the program have increased by 50 percent. For example, the \$.50 per case rebate you received on cereal has now increased to \$.75. 2. We have eliminated the \$25.00 requirement for you to receive a rebate check. All

Are we going in the Right Direction?

By, Natu Patel- Region 3 Director, ELFA Secretary

While the Economy brands have been added to the Choice Privileges program we need to work hard to understand the program and it's benefits.

"Are we going in the right direction?"

Yes, but we need to work harder at providing our guests with a unified fresh, clean and comfortable room with nice amenities, bright lights, and smiling faces at the front desk. This is how our brands can succeed. We can advertise everywhere but if we do not have the product or customer service in our hotels, the guest will not return. If you are not ready, get ready now! All upgraded amenities need to be in your hotels, take some extra time to create a warm welcoming room that is clean with good lighting and furniture in good condition. With new logoed uniforms as well as pens and stationery.

We need to put our best foot forward for the Economy brands.

Choice Hotels International needs to start working cooperatively with the franchisees and listening to their issues and concerns. We are seeing that the guests are increasing their demands and their behavior continues to change. As ELFA/ROA, we need to work on making changes so we can be leaders in the industry with Choice. These items include fair franchising, franchise fees and marketing. Franchisees need to make sure they are living up to their obligation, with a clean, comfortable, updated room.

With a true partnership between ELFA/ROA and Choice, and continued open dialogue, we will have the "Passport to Success" – a win-win for us all!

Bucks rebates. This will be a simple form outlining their terms and will automatically register you for the increased rebates. If you are not currently a customer of theirs, we urge you to take a look at their new pricing programs and the rebate benefits. We are confident in both cases that properties will see a reduction in their cost of providing breakfast.

An additional benefit of these changes is that both US Foodservice and SYSCO now offer reduced pricing and fixed mark-ups on all product categories that help take the worry out of watching your food costs and monitoring your invoices. Also, the representatives from both companies will now be familiar with Choice Brand Standards and can help advise you on how to meet and exceed them.

We look forward to continually improving Breakfast Bucks in the future and providing value back to you, our property owners and managers. If you have any questions, please contact the Brand Solutions department at (888)797-7911.

participating properties will receive a quarterly check no matter how much they earned.

In order to accomplish these two goals we had to make the reporting system more streamlined and efficient. To do this it was necessary to narrow the number of sources that we have to gather your information. On April 1, 2008, the Breakfast Bucks rebates began being available only to those purchasing through SYSCO or US Foodservice. Since 70 plus percent of Choice properties are currently using these two distributors and over 90 percent of properties signing up in 2007 used US Foodservice or SYSCO, this solution benefits the vast majority of Choice Hotels properties.

In January, representatives from SYSCO or US Foodservice began visiting properties to assist operators with the change. If you are currently a customer of SYSCO or US Foodservice, it will be necessary to sign up with them to continue receiving your Breakfast

Benefits of ELFA Membership, By Bharat Patel- Region 1 ELFA Director

The Econo Lodges of America Franchisee Association, Inc. [ELFA] is a self-sustaining organization with more than 30 years of experience representing the interests of its dues-paying members throughout the United States. The goal of the organization is to help each franchisee maximize the value of their property through networking and the sharing of creative ideas as well as time and money saving tips. (\$\$\$)

ELFA offers a forum to share information beneficial to both franchisees and Choice Hotels International (CHI) which, in turn, will provide the highest possible quality of services to Econo Lodge franchisees and their guests. Membership allows open communications between the franchisee and Econo Lodges of America through regularly scheduled meetings. Participation in the organization and its various committees allows both parties to work to improve the Econo Lodge system. It supports Econo Lodges of America in the

implementation of system-wide programs which benefit the membership and will result in the Econo Lodge brand achieving and maintaining a top position in the economy lodging industry. (\$\$\$) Our boards are made up of volunteer owners, operators, who work tirelessly to protect the interests of Econo Lodge franchisees.

Today, we need your help

- 1) We need your Support -- Without more participation from our members it is hard to move forward on new initiatives and have our voice heard.
- 2) We need your Signature-- please sign up at convention for auto-bill pay on your franchise statements. This will do two things .One all a stronger more united voice and two help us with outlaying a budget year.

WHY JOIN ELFA ?

- 1)Money - If you want to Save money, Save time

2) More Money -If want Choice to contribute funds to help build our brand.

3) Oodles of Money -- If you want your voice heard when it comes to new brand initiatives. i.e sign, choice advantage

4)Voice or Exit, you will find that in the Hotel Franchise business Licensees have two choices. I chose to voice and not exit. If you are happy with Choice Hotels, tell us; If you are mad at CHI tell us and if you have a horror story and no-one will listen (including your imaginary dog) tell us. Email us.

5.) We are not your BPC, we are Franchisees who go through tribulations everyday. When I put out a fire or figure out something new on Choice Advantage. We share--- The names will be changed to protect the innocent. Please tell us what is going on out there Sign UP !

“ELFA offers a forum to share information beneficial to both franchisees and Choice Hotels International (CHI) which, in turn, will provide the highest possible quality of services to Econo Lodge franchisees and their guests.”



Phone Number: 877-467-7864

Email: Dule@Met-Pat.com

Website:

Www.Inn-Phone.com

The downside of being retired is the boredom, how can you be bored you ask? let me tell ya, though you have worked with your spouse over these last, (how many numerous years), you always had someplace to go .Not now, I sit at the breakfast table scratching and burping, staring at each other and wondering how your going to get through another long day with nothing to do or accomplish.

Do I have every ones attention now, your sitting there wondering what the heck am I about, right? I am talking about is selling your investment and the aftermath, and like everything else if you don't plan ahead you will be screwed!

**Around the Water Cooler-
By Robert E Thompson**

How you wonder, this is the day that you have dreamed about for years, all the sweat, worry, plans for your business until it comes time to let go.

Okay, congratulations you have an offer on your baby, someone wants to buy you out and all you can think about is how much money your going to charge this fool to take over your headache. Just remember a few things before you go and your name on the sold line for the last time.

Some of the things that must be considered is how close are you to your date with Choice, (check your contract). Things to remember that are going to effect how much money it is going to cost you your final months income, travel agent commission, Easy Choice payment, ELFA dues, Co-op dues, furniture, disposables and nine million more things.

I highly recommend that you research this topic to death and talk to other people who have gone through it, remember this is a legal way to avoid paying Uncle Sam any capital gains tax. .Okay at the closing they just handed you the final check and you look at it and all those zeroes all the dreams it holds for, and you feel just a little remorse for selling out your dream so cheaply, but you know its for the best. Now comes the hard part, commonly known as now what? This is the question that I opened this column with and if don't plan your retirement the way you did everything else you will be insane like me within forty five days....

I hope this column helps explain some of the complications of selling your baby and if I can help in anyway send an email to laybackeddie@yahoo.com and I'll give you as much help as I can., so good luck and I hope to see everyone soon.



**ELFA ROA Reception
Members Only**

Black & White Ball

You are cordially Invited

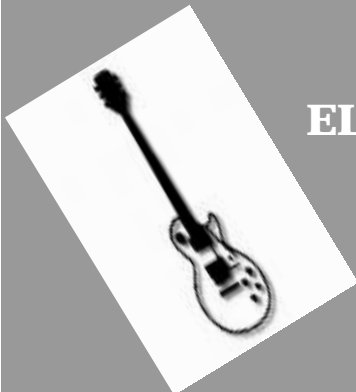
Date: Wednesday May 7th, 2008

Time: 5:45pm until 7:45pm

Location: Choice Hotels Annual Convention
Check the Convention Schedule for Location
Mandalay Bay Hotel and Casino
Las Vegas, NV

*Please join us for Appetizers,
Cocktails and Live Music*

ELFA and ROA celebrate over 35 years!!!!



Note Members only

Must have membership ribbon in order to enter

Black & White Dress Code



Economy Brands Convention Schedule at a Glance



Monday May 5th, 2008

Registration is Open
CHA Prep and Exams

Tuesday May 6th, 2008

Registration is Open

11:30am-2:30pm **ELFA-ROA Roundtables and mini- Tradeshow**



***ELFA Election of Directors
** 5 DRAWINGS to win \$100.00 is cash !!

2:30pm-5:30pm **Educational Sessions**

Wednesday May 7th, 2008

8:30am-11:00am **Corporate Business Session**
*Keynote speaker Dr. Deepak Chopra



11:00am – 12:30pm **ELFA Annual Membership Meeting**

2:00pm – 3:00pm **ROA Annual Membership Meeting**

5:45pm – 7:45pm **ELFA & ROA Reception**
***Members only -must have badge

8:00pm – 10:00pm **Concert on the Beach – open to all**
**Special performance by the Beach Boys



Thursday, May 8th, 2008

8:00am – 9:30am **Econo Lodge Brand Session**

10:00am – 11:30am **Rodeway Inn Brand Session**

8:30am-4:45pm **Educational Sessions**

9am-4:30pm **Choiceville Open**

6:30pm-11pm **Reception -Gala Dinner and Concert.**

Econolodge Guests Enjoy Convenience of In-Room Safe
By Allied Member Safemark Systems

In celebration of our 25th year anniversary



“As an owner/operator, the system is a no-brainer. Free equipment and added revenues to the bottom line is more than a win-win!”

Leonard Richardson VA231

“We were one of the early entrants to the Safemark System and I was honestly very skeptical about the reaction from my guests about a fee for the safe warranty charge on the folio. Those fears disappeared rather quickly after the first two months when our properties achieved 98% acceptance from our guests. In fact, most guests enjoy the convenience of an in room safe, and when they learn that there is a warranty against loss of the valuables they are impressed.

As an owner/operator, the system is a no-brainer. Free equipment and added revenues to the bottom line is more than a win-win! When a guest eventually does suffer a loss of an item, and we ask if they used the safe, they automatically understand that the hotel will not be responsible for their lack of securing their belongings. It certainly makes it a less unpleasant situation for me, and for my staff.

Installation was accomplished quickly, and cleanly. The staff from top to bottom at Safemark has always been customer service driven and able to handle any question or concern to our complete satisfaction. I highly recommend Safemark Systems to every hotel currently without an in-room security solution for their guests. It is easy to implement, easy to operate, virtually no maintenance issues, and a proven profit center.”

Leonard Richardson

For 25 years, Safemark has led the hospitality industry with leading-edge security products and unmatched customer service. With more than 400,000 in-room safe installations and over 1/2 Billion guest transactions since 1983, nobody knows in-room security better than Safemark.

You will receive \$250 cash rebate for every 50 rooms signed on the SCF Program. This is valid now to May 31, 2008. Safemark’s Security Cash Flow (SCF) Program

increases guest satisfaction while **adding revenue to your bottom line**. With no investment on the part of the operator, guest friendly procedures, an optional charge to the guest and Safemark’s ongoing support, the SCF program is Safemark’s most popular guest room safe program.

For more information on this offer, please contact
Sasha Paulin at
1-800-255-8818 ext. 118
or
spaulin@safemark.com
www.SAFEMARK.com
25th Year Anniversary

INCREASE SECURITY & GUEST SATISFACTION ALL AT NO COST TO YOU!

FALL SPECIAL FOR ELFA/RODEWAY MEMBERS..

\$250 Cash Rebate per 50 rooms and a Silver Anniversary Sale

THIS FALL, SAFEMARK WILL GIVE \$250 CASH REBATE UPON INSTALLATION ON ALL NEW SECURITY CASH FLOW CUSTOMERS SIGNED BEFORE MAY 31, 2008.

Safemark’s Security Cash Flow (SCF) Program increases guest satisfaction while adding revenue to your bottom line. With no investment on the part of the operator, guest friendly procedures, an optional charge to the guest and Safemark’s ongoing support, the SCF program is Safemark’s most popular guest room safe program.

“NO OUT OF POCKET PROVISION”

- GUESTS GET A PERSONAL SAFE IN THEIR ROOM TO PROTECT LAPTOP COMPUTERS, AND OTHER VALUABLES.
- GUESTS HAVE A MONETARY RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF A LOSS
- PEACE OF MIND FOR GUESTS WHO HAVE COME TO EXPECT A GUEST ROOM SAFE
- YOU GET INCREASED REVENUE
- A \$250 REBATE PER ROOM
- HAPPY GUESTS
- 24/7 CUSTOMER SERVICE



For more information on this offer, please contact Sasha Paulin @ 800-255-8818 ext 118 or spaulin@safemark.com

HotelSafeGuard.com Helps Hotels Give Fraudulent Guests the Heave-Ho

Startling Revenue Losses Inspires Creation of Web-Based Hotel Community

SAN FRANCISCO--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- HotelSafeGuard.com, a global, confidential, subscriber-only, database of hotel guests with a history of fraud and misconduct, has officially launched. This online hotel community was started in response to increasing losses and the need to detect patterns of fraudulent behavior and misconduct of hotel guests. The American Hotel & Lodging Association estimates industry losses to be over 100 million dollars a year. According to Peter Goldman of The White Collar Crime Fighter, "Hotels lose an estimated 5% to 7% of annual revenues to fraud because until now, they lacked the ability to detect patterns of fraud." Now hotels can take a discrete approach to decreasing losses and they can do so while still upholding the highest standards in guest services using HotelSafeGuard.Com.

"HotelSafeGuard allows hotels to research a guest when issues arise," says David Barber, Director of Sales & Marketing for HotelSafeGuard. "The hotel can see if the guest has a

history of incidents, and then independently decide how to address the issue."

In addition to its research function, subscribers can submit information about incidents linked to financial losses or misconduct. Reports go through a three-step verification process. "The goal is to protect the privacy of hotels and guests," says Barber. "Only valid complaints will be entered in the database."

Key features of HotelSafeGuard.Com include:

Speed: Searching the database takes seconds. Submitting a report takes five minutes. The verification of report data is completed within two weeks.

Search: HotelSafeGuard enables subscribers to quickly and discretely search a database of guests with a history of misconduct. Subscribers will see what incidents the guests have been involved in (if any) and the city where the incident occurred. *For confidentiality and privacy, names of hotels, which filed the report, are never stored in the database.*

Submit: HotelSafeGuard believes that both guests and hoteliers deserve protection. By allowing hotels to submit reports on guests involved in fraud or misconduct and by implementing a three-stage verification process, both are protected.

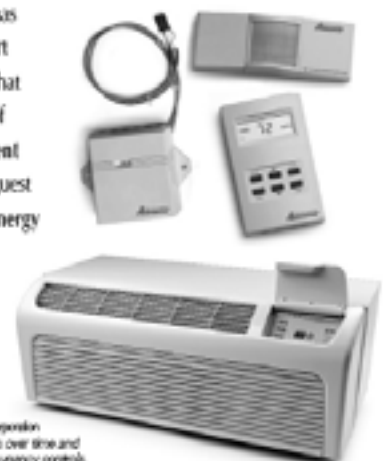
About HotelSafeGuard.Com

HotelSafeGuard.com, a subscriber-based, global, web community among hotels, allows the confidential sharing of information on guests with a history of misconduct, scams and fraud. HotelSafeGuard works to reduce financial and physical risk caused by such clients. Sharing hotels' commitment to excellence in guest services, HotelSafeGuard is a facilitator for improved success in hospitality profitability. For more information, visit HotelSafeGuard.com.

A SMART WAY TO REDUCE PTAC ENERGY COSTS BY UP TO 35%!

Designed exclusively for Amana PTAC units, DigiSmart™ technology has dramatically raised the bar in PTAC controls. What's more, the DigiSmart Control Board offers many programmable features and self-diagnostics that help facility personnel better manage the care, costs and maintenance of the PTACs. Add to that our new DigiSmart™ Wireless Energy Management Suite that helps ensure that you minimize energy used in cooling your guest rooms when your guests are not in the room. The DigiSmart Wireless Energy Management Suite includes: a Wireless Antenna, a Remote-Mounted Thermostat and a combination Motion Sensor/Door Switch.

Amana Heating & Air Conditioning **DigiSmart** CONTROL BOARD



© 2008 Goodman Company, L.P., Fayetteville, Tennessee. www.amana-ptac.com Amana® is a trademark of Maytag Corporation and is used under license to Goodman Company, L.P. All rights reserved. These savings represent estimated savings over time and were generated using general assumptions including energy levels, local weather averages and use of occupancy controls. Actual savings will vary according to actual use habits, room square footage, and how the unit is installed.

Taking Training to a New Level!

By Brenda Raley, Sr. Director of Learning and Performance Solutions

Convention attendees are strongly urged to register early online for Convention educational sessions. Go to ChoiceCentral (www.choicecentral.com) and click on the Convention Web site link to sign up.

The Learning and Performance Solution team has been busy developing new programs, redesigning existing programs, and enhancing technology to better meet the training needs of our hotel partners and their property-level teams.

The first order of business was to create a General Manager's (GM's) training program that was more "Choice" focused. A new training program—Hospitality Operations Success Training (HOST) was launched in Silver Spring with twenty four attendees. The program focuses on the necessary disciplines of hotel operations.

Our goal is to ensure that GMs who are involved in the day to day operations of a hotel have basic knowledge in operational and management skills and that they have a thorough comprehension of Choice systems and resources. At the conclusion of the five-day class, attendees are asked to complete action plans that include specific initiatives they want to implement once they return to their property.

On Friday afternoon of the weeklong HOST training session, a comprehensive exam is given and must be passed by attendees are proof that they have satisfactorily learned the objectives of the class.

Another program that is being re-tooled is the ResCoach.

A group of GMs, front office managers, guest services agents (GSAs), and Choice training professionals are working with Tracorp of Phoenix to develop a comprehensive online course on the Choice Learning Management System (LMS) to train front line staff to turn "lookers into bookers".

ResCoach's e-learning course will center on training staff in "looker to booker" basics including proper greetings, qualifying the caller, the sale, and the close.

The program will also feature best practices and tools for GMs to coach and counsel their staff members.

Educational sessions and experiences at this year's Convention will be venues for the new ResCoach program and will be key learning opportunities for attendees.

Whether your focus is operations, sales and marketing, ownership and development, technology, or e-commerce, you'll hear from industry experts and Choice leadership on topics that matter the most to your hotel

and your hotel's operation at Convention.

Sessions are being designed to provide you with specific strategies to grow and improve your business, so don't miss your chance to earn points towards your certification and professional development requirements. So come to Convention and learn how to grow and expand your horizons by taking advantage of the more than 100 educational session opportunities available to you including four new Choice Training Days programs will debut on Monday of Convention week.

Classes on sales and prospecting, supervisory skills, behavioral interviewing, and customer service will be included in our menu of workshops being delivered at the Convention Marketplace.

Convention attendees are strongly urged to register early online for Convention educational sessions. Go to ChoiceCentral (www.choicecentral.com) and click on the Convention Web site link to sign up.

Education Committee update,

by Alka Patel Education Committee Chair, Region 5 ELFA Director

As everyone may have heard Choice Hotels continues General Manager Mandatory Training for all properties.

During the ELFA-ROA Atlanta Board meeting Education Training Committee discussed with Choice the hardship that franchisee's face having to leave the property for a five day training class. After our discussion with Choice, Choice is considering other viable options, such as regional training. This should ease the hardship.

We are hoping to hear the options Choice will offer to ease this hardship.

Look for an update as we receive more information.

Learning Management System (LMS): Hopefully everyone has had a chance to use LMS training site located front page of Choice Advantage. It's called interactive training (click on choiceadvantage training). Education and Training Committee would like to express the value of this training site for all properties and their employees. We would encourage you to take a

moment and review the site and have your employees sign up and take the training. The net result will increase the dollars on your bottom line.

Choice appears to be putting a lot of effort into their training program for all aspects of property operations. We hope everybody takes advantage of this training site for yourself and all of your employees. This program will only help our brand grow.

QA Update, from Choice Hotels International

On February 25, 2008, Choice's Quality Assurance (QA) partner, LRA Worldwide, began conducting Quality Assurance Reviews (QARs) in Econo Lodge and Rodeway Inn brand hotels using the new brand-specific QA forms. The new Quality Assurance program is designed to improve quality and consistency throughout the entire system and ultimately lead to greater guest satisfaction.

Choice has developed a wealth of information and materials to assist you in preparing for your hotel's upcoming QAR and strongly encourages you to be proactive:

In mid-February, all hotels were mailed a QA Success Pack. This document, also posted on the brand pages (www.choicecentral.com),

provides an overview of the entire QA program. Also on the QA tab, you will

- find:
- *The new QAR form
 - *An explanation of the QAR form pass/fail rules
 - *A Change Matrix that highlights Brand Standards that changed prior to the launch of the new QAR form in February 2008
 - *FAQs on the QAR process with LRA
 - *Instructions on how to access on-line QAR Reports
 - *An Interactive Training Presentation

To access this information, visit ChoiceCentral.com, click on your brand logo and then the Quality Assurance tab.

Many hotels have indicated that they found it helpful to do a "mock" QAR at their hotel prior to the inspection, using the QAR form posted on the brand page.

You will receive a preliminary QAR score and a Comprehensive Action Plan

that lists any deficiencies noted in Cleanliness, Condition and Brand Standards on the day of the inspection. During your first QAR with LRA, Brand Standards will be scored but will not impact whether you pass or fail.

Several days later, you will receive an e-mail providing instructions on how to access your final QAR reports online. This e-mail will also include a link to a brief survey that enables you to provide feedback on your QAR experience. Please take the time to participate in this survey. It provides valuable feedback for Choice on the new process.

Have questions or need assistance preparing for your QAR:

Econo Lodge – contact your Brand Performance Consultant

Rodeway Inn – contact the Rodeway Inn Operations Resource Center Brand Performance Consultant at 866-992-7672

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CHOICE'S NEW QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM: WHAT TO EXPECT

Choice's new Quality Assurance (QA) program is built on the foundation of our brand-focused organization and will ensure consistent measurement of brand standards and hotel quality. The new program will provide detailed QA reports that help you identify opportunities to be even more successful.

As part of our new QA program, Quality Assurance Reviews (QARs) will now be conducted by Lasher, Rush & Associates (LRA). LRA has over 15 years of experience conducting QARs and works with several of the largest hotel companies in the world, including Choice Canada.

Following is the QA Program launch timeline for Choice's domestic brands:

- Econo Lodge and Rodeway Inn: Late February 2008
- Comfort Inn, Comfort Suites, Sleep Inn, Quality and Clarion: Launched April 2007

This document is designed to answer the most frequently asked questions about the QAR process so that you know what to expect during your first QAR with LRA. If you have additional questions, please contact your BPC.



Room Condition Steering Committee Update

By, Mike Adams-Region 6 ELFA Director

The ELFA Board along with CHOC and Choice Hotels has formed a steering committee looking at room condition. Econo Lodge, Quality Inn and Comfort Inns have scored the lowest in their market segment on room condition over the last couple of years. Choice has hired the Brand Consultancy to join with this committee to help determine what can be done to improve these brands.

The committee met twice in February and again in March with a meeting to follow in April. We have conducted a very open ended survey of property owners, employees and guests of our brands and

the competitive set. The results of this survey have been reviewed and digested. We are now in the process of sending out a more specific survey to 1500 guest and potential guest. 500 from each brand.

With the results of this survey we hope to determine what we can do to improve our room condition. When that is determined, we will beta test it to see what the results will be.

Although the Beta testing will not be done by convention there will be information available. Come to your brand session to hear more information about room condition.

Econo Lodge Moves Forward with Room Condition Initiative

by Kelly Kane- Choice Hotels International

“We started this project with these three brands because they represent the greatest opportunity for improvement in room condition scores,”

said Haase.

room condition scores,” said Haase. “Room condition scores for Econo Lodge brand hotels have been trailing the competition for a while,” said Haase.

Industry experts such as J.D. Powers and Associates, consistently report that room condition is the biggest contributor to guest satisfaction for economy tier hotels. In addition, Choice research shows that the guest room is the key driver in guest satisfaction and their likelihood to recommend (LTR) an Econo Lodge property to others.

“To move the Econo Lodge brand forward we need to improve guest room conditions, which will increase repeat business, boost LTR and increase revenue opportunities for our franchisees.”

Room condition initiative links directly to Econo Lodge brand strategic plans

The room condition initiative is a top strategic goal for moving the Econo Lodge brand forward. The goal of this initiative is to develop long-term programs that will improve guest’s perceptions of the room condition of Econo Lodge brand hotels.

In late February, Bruce Haase, Choice’s Executive Vice President, global brand operations, announced a major long-term initiative to improve guest room conditions at all Econo Lodge brand hotels as well as Comfort Inn and Quality brand hotels.

“We started this project with these three brands because they represent the greatest opportunity for improvement in

To understand what drives room condition – at a very granular level – Choice recently launched an interactive and dynamic brainstorming tool with a variety of stakeholders including owners and general managers of the three participating brands as well as guests and Choice associates.

The response rate to the brainstorming session exceeded expectations as more than 900 owners and general managers, 1,000 guests, and 500 Choice associates shared their ideas and opinions on what cues they use to judge the condition of a hotel guest room.

Strong franchisee involvement key to initiative success

The involvement of franchisees at the start of this program is an important part of the success of the guest room condition initiative.

ELFA Members Mike Adams and Manish Desai are representing the brand on the Room Condition Steering Committee, helping guide all aspects of the project.

Next Steps

In the coming months, Choice will conduct additional in depth research with guests and potential guests of Econo Lodge, Comfort Inn and Quality brand hotels to provide an even deeper view of consumer expectations and desires related to guest room conditions.

The Steering Team will use the findings from the research to shape the final recommendations for a pilot test at a limited number of hotels later this year before the program is rolled out across the entire system.

We are confident that Choice’s commitment to work side-by-side with franchisees combined with focused guest research will ensure that the initiative will yield excellent results for the Econo Lodge brand.

Updated information about this important initiative will be featured as part of the Econo Lodge brand sessions at Convention.

Smart Hotel Operators Emphasize Preventative Maintenance

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

Those are Ben Franklin’s wise words.

In the hotel business, preventative maintenance is linked directly to guest satisfaction and profitability. It’s a lot cheaper to keep a toilet in good condition than it is to deal with a flooded bathroom or make amends to an angry guest. And, routine maintenance is the most effective way to reduce water and utility bills, and keep travelers coming back.

The key is to get started. There’s no time like the present. You don’t need an elaborate process and it only takes a few minutes each day. Have your maintenance person go to the first room on the first floor and get started today. Have him or her look at electrical fixtures. Tighten switches, check plugs and outlets, replace burned-out light bulbs, and identify lamps that need new shades.

Next, check for dripping in the bathroom. Replace or clean faucet aerators. Tighten the toilet seat and shower rod. Look for grouting that needs repair and make a note so that several rooms can have their

grouting repaired at once.

Just shoot for a few rooms each day. If ten rooms are done in a week, all the rooms in a 100-room hotel will be done in 10 weeks. To maximize efficiency, the maintenance worker should use a checklist. Choice has developed a maintenance checklist that you can find on ChoiceCentral.com by going to [references/operations toolkit/operations](#).

Here are three examples of quick and easy preventative maintenance steps that could improve the operation of your hotel today.

1. **Change HVAC and PTAC filters.**

It’s fast and cheap. It can help improve energy efficiency and extend the life of very expensive equipment. Properties should also clean HVAC and PTAC coils regularly to ensure optimum performance.

2. **Check toilets, tubs, showers and sinks for leaks.** This should be done regularly, not only in response to guest complaints.

Leaks often begin so small that routine maintenance could find and correct them before guests are even aware a leak exists.

3. **Check windows and doors.** Fix broken hinges and knobs. Caulk and insulate wherever there is a draft or unwanted airflow. Make certain locks work properly.

To make these tasks even easier, be sure to keep common maintenance equipment in stock so your staff can be as efficient as possible. HD Supply Facilities Maintenance is a great source for most of the items your maintenance people will need. And remember, when it comes to boosting profitability, keeping costs down, and giving your guests a more enjoyable and relaxing travel experience, a little preventative maintenance can go a long way.

Preventative maintenance is key, but if ever a guest has a maintenance problem such as a leaking faucet or burned out light bulb, make sure to fix it. According to GIS scores, guests who had a problem which was resolved were 31% more likely to recommend their hotel than guests whose problems were not resolved.



Great Education at Choice Convention

By, Chris Longstreet Choice Hotels International

The Choice Hotels International Annual Convention is loaded with strategically designed educational sessions that will help you increase revenue and improve your operations. Five tracks have been created to assist property owners and managers to learn and maximize time and energy while at the convention. Tracks this year include: Sales, Operations, Systems and Choice Resources, eCommerce, Ownership
Educational programs begin on May 5 with special full- and half-day workshops that include:

CHA / CLM Review and Exam Session ,
HOST Review and Test Session , Behavioral Interviewing: Discovering Your Employee’s Potential Success Before You Hire Them , A Beginner’s Guide to Sales and

Prospecting, The Art of Being "On Stage" - Effective Service That Delivers Curtain Calls Every Time! , Supervisory Train the Trainer and Review (STTAR)

SALES AND ECOMMERCE SESSIONS HIGHLIGHT CONVENTION OFFERINGS: Driving revenue is key to the success of a hotel operation. The educational sessions in the sales track focus on generating revenue by increasing sales and penetrating new markets for individual properties. Sales strategies of specific target markets and understanding consumer behavior will be outlined and analyzed. Discover current trends and new ways to drive revenue to your property.

NEW OPEN HOUSE PROGRAMS DEBUT AT CONVENTION: Open Houses” are designed to provide targeted educational subjects / operational solutions in a smaller more intimate session. Presenters and leaders of specific areas will be available to discuss topics, answer questions, and provide solutions to the topic present. Participants will also be encouraged to join in at any time during the office hours. Walk in and simply consult one on one or join the discussion in progress.

Complete convention educational session descriptions are available on the convention registration website. Programs are available May 5-8 and can be registered for in advance.

Co-Op Marketing- Where we are

Natu Patel- Region 3 Director and ELFA Secretary

“Choice announced recently that they have raised their contribution to co-op marketing to \$2 million”

Co-op marketing leaders in all 13 regions, did an excellent job by submitting their co-op advertisement plans on time and in detail for 2008. Check with your co-op Region director for our latest marketing plans. Those of you who are currently enrolled in the 2008 program will be automatically renewed for participation in 2009.

Good news is that Choice Hotels International has seen how well the co-ops have been working, through their Co-op Directors, increasing revenue and awareness for our properties. Choice announced recently that they have raised their contribution to co-op marketing to \$2 million. By continuing our co-op efforts

professionally, maybe Choice will consider additional funding for co-op marketing?

If your property is not currently participating in the 2008 program but would like to be included in 2009, please go to choicecentral.com, marketing, and download the co-op enrollment form for your Region. Fill out the form and fax it to the CHOC Office at the number listed on the bottom of the form. For 2009 participation, you will be billed on your franchise statement in the Fall for participation. Early sign up forms will help Choice to create billing information for next year 2009.

As stated before, if you are not a co-op member property you are missing out on some very valuable advertising. The reservation center and other toll free co-op marketing numbers, as well as

internet, coupon books, state guides, etc. do not list your property and, therefore, you will not receive any bookings from these efforts.

Co-op marketing plans are targeted to local areas as well as states and regions to attract guests in transit throughout our states and regions.

If you are participating in the co-op programs, please make sure that you are honoring any discounts. Please pay attention to information received from us on the co-op advertising and what rates apply and when the ad will run. Take time to check your information (normally sent one or two times before advertisement is run) to correct any information that is not correct for your property, and be sure to follow up to be sure its correct your information is correct.

WWW.ELFA.org Update


Dilip Vekaria, Region 11 Director


As you may notice, ELFA.ORG is currently been going through some changes. We are upgrading the site to create a more user friendly interface for our members. Completion of the site will be rolling out around convention time. We want to create a portal were we can communicate with you- our members with ease. We intend to have current information

on there regarding our brand. Future plans are to have a section where ELFA and the members can communicate with each other, something in the line of a forum, but just for members only. As members, if anyone out there has ideas for our site, please do share with us, you can email them to me at: dvekaria@gmail.com.

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2008 ELFA-ROA Committees

Fall Regional Task Force: Mahendra Patel, Gary Koester, Leonard Richardson, Kay Collier- Pittman, Jimmy Hu
Corporate Liaisons: Tim Shuy, Virginia Gentilcore

Re-Imaging Task Force: Mahendra Patel, Gary Koester, Hasu Patel, Natu Patel, Leonard Richardson, Poovin Pillay, Katen Patel
Corporate Liaisons: Alexandria Jaritz, Jay Sigona

QAR/Standards Committee: Hasu Patel, Bharat Patel, Manish Patel, Kal Masters, Alka Patel, Mike Adams, Katen Patel, Dilip Vekaria, Joanne Johnston, Neil Bahkta
Corporate Liaisons: Alexandria Jaritz, Ralph Theigart, Tamara Snyder

Technology Committee: Kal Masters, Katen Patel, Dilip Vekaria, Bruce Faltin, Neil Bahkta
Corporate Liaisons: Todd Davis, Gary Thomson, John Thompson

Marketing and Res Committee: Mahendra Patel, Gary Koester, Leonard Richardson, Bharat Patel, Kay Collier-Pittman, Jimmy Hu
Corporate Liaisons: Bruce Haas, Tim Shuy, Kevin Bradt, Joe Crosby, Bruce Dincin, Bill Carlson, Don Brockway

Co-op Committee: Natu Patel, Manish Desai, Arron Patel, Kay Collier-Pittman
Corporate Liaisons: Joey Martin, Marybeth Knight

PR And Membership Committee: Bharat Patel, Alka Patel, Mike Adams, Poovin Pillay, Aroon Patel, Kay Collier- Pittman, Neil Bahkta
Corporate Liaisons: Anne Madison

Education and Conferences Committee: Natu Patel, Alka Patel, Poovin Pillay, Joanne Johnston
Corporate Liaisons: Tim Shuy, Ralph Thiergart, Virginia Gentilcore

By Laws and Elections Committee: Hasu Patel, Natu Patel, Leonard Richardson, Manish Desai, Kay Collier-Pittman

Audit Committee: Leonard Richardson, Anil Chagan, Kay Collier-Pittman

Econo Lodge on TV--- Are you Ready??

By, Leonard Richardson; ELFA Past President

Several of the ELFA Board of Directors recently traveled to Silver Spring to meet with Kevin Bradt, Bruce Dincin, representatives of Arnold Worldwide, and the new Chief Marketing Officer of Choice Hotels, Chris Malone. During this meeting we had the opportunity to review the current status of the system in regard to the re-imaging launch, as well as a review of the upcoming television advertising campaign.

The TV ad spots we saw were preliminary and much work needs to be done to finish what will actually air. But, the Directors were very pleased with the concepts, and for preliminary ads they were very well done. Entertaining, fun, cute, and absolutely on message were terms we all used in describing what we saw. We believe you will all be very pleased with the final product this summer.

I am very pleased to report that

over half of the Econo Lodge system has placed orders for signage, a good number are in the pipeline, and so most of the system has taken advantage of the incentives offered by Choice Hotels for the new signage at both the 25% and 15% levels. Time has run out for those properties which for one reason or another have yet to take action. However, it is not too late to get your property in line for getting installed prior to July 1, which will provide your property with the maximum benefit of the television ads scheduled to begin on that date and run for 6 weeks. If you have not already done so, get your surveys ordered and your signage in the pipeline for that date.

As far as pricing concerns, ELFA conducted a nationwide conference call for properties encountering problems and while there were a few other issues raised, pricing was by far the leading concern. We voiced those con-

cerns to Choice Hotels, educated ourselves and the membership on what was included in that pricing and helped a few properties in relief of some extraordinary circumstances. Overall, since that call, most of the concerns have been overcome. This is still an expensive and difficult project in a difficult and uncertain financial climate. In the end, the Econo Lodge brand will emerge as a stronger brand, competing at the top of our segment and not looking back!

Take advantage of the special marketing efforts being undertaken this year! Online and print campaigns will augment the television campaign with our brand new image, and our radio campaign will pound home our new affiliation with Choice Privileges frequent stay program. Get you new signs ordered today and get ready to beat the competition into the ground as they retreat from new spending on marketing efforts!





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Region 5 Director: Alka Patel (609) 927-3220
Region 6 Director: Mike Adams (716) 825-1400
Region 7 Director: Poovin Pillay (423) 956-3305
Region 8 Director: OPEN
Region 9 Director: Katen Patel (503) 504-5566
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Region 12 Director: OPEN

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