



CHOICE HOTELS INTERNATIONAL

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ELFA ROA Franchisee Associations

Fall 2009

President Message to ELFA:

Inside this issue:

<i>New Economy Brand Director</i>	3
<i>ELFA Membership</i>	3
<i>APEX Awards</i>	4-5
<i>Room Condition</i>	6-7
<i>Modified OAR</i>	8
<i>Marketing Update</i>	9
<i>ELFA / ROA Committees</i>	11

Dear ELFA Members

It was great to see each of you at this year's Fall Regional Meetings; I believe they were a success and you were able to see ELFA at work; as our encouragement to Choice to create more single brand advertising was successfully displayed. On behalf of the board I would like to congratulate all of our Gold, Platinum and APEX winners! Remember that nominations for APEX awards have already begun, so start nominating our hotels and let us work harder together to have more of us accepting these great hotel honors.

Experia Update--- I offer my appreciation to all ELFA Members as well as all other hotels in the Choice family worldwide for your

trust in your Association Leadership as well as in Choice Hotels International. The Senior team at Choice worked diligently on our behalf, and I would like to personally thank each of them for all their hard work.

I would like to personally thank all of our committee chairs and members for working diligently over the past six months on issues that have directly impacted all of us. Currently our marketing committee is working hard on discussions with Choice about including Econo Lodge in TV advertising, while our standards committee is working timelessly with Choice on the room condition initiative and are continuing discussions about the timeline of replacement items during these economic times. Finally our Education committee clearly presented to Choice to include the CHO program as part of the certification

process which Choice agreed to and it is now an accepted certification as well as CHA, CLM and HOST. For more information about certification and other educational tools, please take a moment to log on to ChoiceUniversity.com, as there is a wealth of information right at your finger tips.

As your ELFA President I would like to advise you about the "Franchisee Fee Relief Fund." If you are currently experiencing financial hardships, depending on your personal situation, Choice may be able to help. For more information about this fund, please contact your regional director, or call me directly at 803-230-4900.

Once again, it was great meeting each of you at this year's Fall Regional meetings. Please take a moment to look through our membership book, and advise us of information you would like to see in 2010. This information, tools to help you and your hotels succeed in this economy, our Allied Vendor program, which offers special discounts to our membership are all available on [ELFA.org](http://ELFA.org). Our last meeting was in November in Silver Spring, with the Marketing Committee. Our full board, Choice, CHOC and ROA will be meeting in January in Phoenix.



Natu Patel, President Econo Lodge Franchisee Association

If you have any questions about ELFA or what is happening with Choice, please don't hesitate to contact myself, or your regional director. If you know of an Econo Lodge

owner who currently isn't an ELFA member, please encourage them to join, as the more members we have the stronger is our voice with Choice.

Natu Patel, President

800-322-6555



### Message from the Rodeway President

#### Neil Bhakta



Neil Bhakta, President  
Rodeway Owners Association

Dear ROA Members,  
We had very successful Fall Regional meetings this year. This year's theme of "People. Progress. Achievements" was very appropriate as we exited the meeting with a wealth of educa-

tional training that was designed to help us achieve higher RevPAR, guest satisfaction and increase our bottom line. Each regional offered six educational sessions aimed towards attaining success in day to day operations, sales and marketing, cost cutting and taking advantage from the latest with ecommerce. Overall this year's regional meetings were very productive and beneficial for franchisees, we need to work together to encourage more economy brand owners and managers to utilize the benefits of attending the regional meetings in the future.

The most discussed topic currently with our owners and managers is Expedia. As most of you know by this time that Choice Hotels Int's contract with Expedia expired. Expedia demanded contract terms which included control of our rates and inventory and penalizing hotels who do not participate 100% of the time with a three year contract. After long negotiations both parties agreed on contract terms. Choice

realizes the importance of Expedia to our franchisees and they renegotiated a fair and acceptable contract terms for both parties. I received many calls and emails from Rodeway Inn owners and managers when this initially happened, and I have received mixed views representing both sides of the issue. However, the majority of owners and managers have supported Choice's strong stance with the Expedia's unfair demands which represents increase in commission percentages and complete inventory control. At this point, I thank you for your faith and united support in Choice. Please regularly visit Choice central and power of Choice web page to get the latest updates.

Choice has launched an aggressive campaign to redirect business through Choicehotels.com and other third parties. There will be a calendar and samples of advertising/marketing initiatives posted on the Power of Choice website. ROA will request from Choice that the economy brands get a fair share in

advertising and marketing campaign. I will remain in constant communications with the Choice Corporate leadership to make sure the Rodeway Inn brand will receive its fair share of the supplemental online advertising campaign.

As a reminder to all Rodeway owners, if you are experiencing financial difficulties and having difficult time paying franchisee fees then please contact Choice as soon as possible. Depending on the situation, evaluation of your property and financial position, there might be help available from Choice. It's a good idea to notify Choice and advise them of your financial situation during the early period, rather than waiting until it is too late.

I would like to thank each of you that worked tirelessly this fall with us as Rodeway partnered with 'Rebuild America.'" Thank you again for your continual support and

I promise to continue to work hard on your behalf.

Neil Bhakta, ROA President



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***Craig Mustard, New Director, Brand Planning for  
Rodeway Inn and Econo Lodge***

***a message from Alexandra Jaritz, Vice President, Brand Planning & Management***

Choice Hotels is pleased to announce that Craig Mustard is the new Director of Brand Planning for the Econo Lodge and Rodeway Inn brands, reporting to me. In his role overseeing the economy brands, Craig will work closely with franchisees, the ownership Associations and cross-functionally within Choice to set the strategic direction of the economy brands. He will also continue to develop and implement the programs you need to be competitive in today's challenging marketplace.

Craig comes to the Brand Planning team from the Product Improvement team. Since joining Choice in 2000, he has concentrated his efforts on operations and product quality, working with the Franchise Services, Brand Operations, and Portfolio Operations teams. Most recently, he led the Product Improvement team before moving to his new role in Brand Planning. Prior to joining Choice Hotels, Craig worked with several different hotel companies as a General Manager and Director of Sales for a total of more than 18 years of hospitality management experience.

Choice Hotels has been laying the groundwork to take the economy brands to a new level in guest satisfaction and brand performance.

A key factor in our shared success is the Room Condition program. Craig is also taking a leading role in managing and implementing this important program. We look forward to pursuing our goals for growth and performance under Craig's leadership.



Many of you are aware that Sona Gupta, who has managed the economy brands for the past one-and-a-half years, is preparing to relocate overseas. Sona is working with Choice through the end of the year to help ensure a smooth transition, working closely with Craig. Choice thanks her for her hard work on behalf of the Econo Lodge and Rodeway Inn brands.

Please join us in thanking Sona for her service and welcoming Craig to the Econo Lodge and Rodeway family!

**ELFA Membership Committee Update- By: Manish Desai- Membership Committee Chairman.**

The Econo Lodge Franchisee Association (ELFA) is your Association, working diligently on your behalf. We are your voice with Choice, and we are the bridge between Choice Hotels International and you--- our owners and licensees. ELFA is here to address your issues. If you know of an Econo Lodge owner who is currently not a member, I would encourage you to talk to them about joining, for a small annual fee--- their ideas and concerns will be heard.

In 2009 and into 2010 there are many initiatives that we are working towards on your behalf- just to name a few:

Expedia issue- We communicated with Choice, and are advising them that, if the deal with Expedia didn't work as planned we will be requesting another route to market the economy brands.

TV Advertising- In 2008 for the first time in a long time, Econo Lodge was on TV this benefited many of our hoteliers and we are currently requesting that Choice re-examine TV advertising.

USA Today Standard- Through negotiations with Choice we were able to reduce the standard from 15 to 10 newspapers.

Room Condition- Choice has agreed that replacement of large items requiring large capital investments can be incorporated into your business action plan to remedy further in your timeline. Costs can be deferred over the next several years, please understand that until these items are replaced, it will be reflected in your score.

Single Vendor Suppliers- The board addressed the Ethostream situation with Choice, noting that the challenge was due to the single source suppliers, Choice has agreed to use multiple suppliers in the future, as we saw with the bath and terry amenities.

The Econo Lodge Franchisee Association (ELFA) is your Association, working diligently on your behalf. If you know of an Econo Lodge owner who is currently not a member, I would encourage you to talk to them about joining. For more information about membership or what ELFA is doing for you, please contact Ross Almo- Executive Director at (802) 786-2260.

## 2009 APEX Award Winners Announced at Fall Regional Meetings

2009 marks the second year that Choice Hotels International honored the winners of the APEX (Awards for Property Excellence) Awards at the Fall Regional meetings.

The APEX Awards celebrate the success of hotel staff and recognize individual hotel achievements. Unlike the Gold and Platinum Awards, which are awarded on system data; the APEX Awards are selected from nominations from Choice associates and the franchisee community.

The Awards for each region were presented at the annual Fall Regional Association Meetings. A Selection Committee for each region met to review the nominations and select the winners. The Selection Committee included representatives from CHOC, ELFA, ROA, Choice departments and the Choice field organization.

Congratulations to all of the APEX winners representing the economy brands this year!

**Rookie of the Year** - this award is to recognize the newest properties in the Choice family that have hit the ground running since opening their doors.

### Rookie of the Year Winners – Economy Brands

Region 2: Conversion – Econo Lodge in Brunswick, Georgia (GA610)

Region 3: Conversion – Rodeway in Asheville, North Carolina (NC629)

Region 10: Conversion – Rodeway in Texarkana, Texas (TX443)

Region 11: Conversion – Econo Lodge in Denver, Colorado (CO218)

**Community Hero** - this award recognizes individuals that are actively involved in giving back to their community. Nominations for this award cited specific community service events/initiatives/causes with which the nominee is involved. A winner was selected for each CHOC/ELFA/ROA region in which a nomination was received.

### Community Hero Winners – Economy Brands

Ben Sherrod, Co-Owner of the Econo Lodge Inn & Suites in Demopolis, Alabama (AL251): Ben is committed to his local community and is a very active volunteer for the county prison - including providing meals and participating in rehabilitation programs.

**Best Renovation/Redesign** - these awards are designed to recognize superior hotel renovations and redesigns that have been completed during the past 12 months. A winner was selected for each CHOC/ELFA/ROA region in which a nomination was received.

### Best Renovation/Redesign Winners – Economy Brands

David Holl, General Manager of the Econo Lodge in Kearney, Nebraska (NE119)

**Service Excellence** - these awards are designed to recognize the individuals or departments that went above and beyond to surpass a guest's service expectations. Nominations cited a specific event or occurrence where the individual/team provided exceptional service.

### Service Excellence – Front Desk Winners – Economy Brands

Carla Halfast, Front Desk Manager of the Econo Lodge in Frederick, Maryland (MD134): For her work ethic, her team-oriented nature, and her desire to learn new skills to better assist her co-workers and guests

### Service Excellence – Housekeeping Winners – Economy Brands

Debra Allen, Housekeeper of the Econo Lodge Inn & Suites in Demopolis, Alabama (AL251): Debra has earned tremendous respect within her role. Guest satisfaction and safety is always foremost to her when cleaning a room and she's incredibly thorough with super cleaning techniques!

Roberto Palacio, Housekeeping/Maintenance Manager of the Econo Lodge Inn & Suites in Ridgecrest, California (CA294): For his commitment to taking action based on guest input - making many improvements to the property and contributing to the property's Gold award status.

Theresa Rui, Housekeeper of the Econo Lodge South in Buffalo, New York (NY158): For her quick-thinking and sense of urgency in assisting a guest who collapsed in the parking lot. The ambulance driver stated that Theresa's actions saved the guest's life.

### Service Excellence – General Manager Winners – Economy Brands

Jeanie Hinton, General Manager of the Econo Lodge Town Center in Virginia Beach, Virginia (VA218): For her hard work and dedication to running her property and being an exceptional and compassionate leader for her staff.

Nathan DeLaet, General Manager of the Rodeway Inn in Grand Island, Nebraska (NE025): Over the past 3 years in the GM position, Nathan has done an outstanding job, working from the ground up on the property and making personal contact with guests.

Congratulations, again, to all of our APEX winners this year. Thank you so much for all that you do to make your properties great and your guests happy!

For more information or questions about the APEX Awards, please contact [awards@choicehotels.com](mailto:awards@choicehotels.com) or 1-866-450-TOPS (8677).



## Gold and Platinum Economy Brand Award Winners

By, Amrish Patel Education Committee Chairman



The Choice Hotels Gold and Platinum awards are brand specific and are based on hotel's position within the property ranking system:

- Properties in top 10% of their brand receive "Gold Award" status
- Properties in the top 3% of their brand receive "Platinum Award" status

Award winner are determined by the ranking report published in December 2009 which covers data from December 2008 through November 2009. These ranking are determined by an average of following seven different elements ranks.

-	Likelihood to recommendation	GIS	-	Cleanliness	QAR
-	Overall Condition of Rooms	GIS	-	Condition	QAR
-	Staff Service Customer Relations	GIS	-	Complaints-per-thousand	
-	Brand Standard	QAR			

Winner will be announced in January and honored officially at Choice's Annual Convention. Winning hotels will receive their award and promotional materials in first quarter of 2010. Also, Gold and Platinum award winner receive:

- Exclusive designation on choicehotels.com, showcasing the property to guests and prospective customers as an award-winning hotel.
- Assistance with cultivating local publicity for the award.
- Promotional materials for use at the hotel such as Gold or Platinum award logo and banners.
- Special recognition at Annual convention reception and photo opportunity at fall regional convention.

In order to eligible for these award, hotels must be in good standing with Choice in terms of financial and legal obligations. Hotels must meet criteria related to Guest satisfaction. To be eligible for the Platinum award, a hotel must have 0 unresponsive complaints within last 12 months. To be eligible for the Gold award, a hotel may have one unresponsive complaint within last 12 months.

For more information, contact awards@choicehotels.com or (866) 450-TOPS (8677)

### Congratulations to all the 2008-2009 award winners!!!!!!

#### Econo Lodge Platinum Winners

AZ400	CA300	FL356	FL380	GA375	IA046
KS114	MA121	MI160	MN045	MS161	OR149
PA143	PA170	PA178	SD076	TN173	TX239
VA166	VA226	VA231	WI085		

#### Roadway Inn Platinum Winners

CA996	CO737	KS124	NE011	NE025	TX982
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#### Econo Lodge Gold Winners

AL251	AR151	CA294	CA443	CA568	CA665
CO037	CO219	CT073	FL347	FL352	GA087
GA209	IL237	KS031	MA028	ME007	ME041
MI033	MI232	MI711	MN416	MO048	MS171
MT044	NC475	NC569	NY124	NY140	NI190
NY313	NY613	OR031	OR183	PA152	PA166
PA179	PA341	PA482	PA489	SC131	SC339
SD050	TN157	TN182	TX269	VA064	VA225
VA237	VT022	WI035	WI413	WV400	

#### Roadway Inn

AR135	AZ253	CA976	CAA35	CAA49	CAB22
CO081	CT090	FL996	ID018	NC168	NE003
NE103	OR047	OR154	OR178	PA202	SC329
TX815	WA004				



## **“IMPORTANT DETAILS” Room Condition Program Update By, Katen Patel Standards Committee Chiarman**

The following information is found on the rules and regulations change matrix located on our brand website in choicecentral. Please implement the enhancements noted below by the due dates. The LRA inspections will be checking this information during their inspections beginning 11/01/09.

### **As of November 1, 2009**

Each Housekeeper cart is required to have a current and complete set of the housekeeper's "Guide to Great Room Condition" cards. Cards are to be mounted in a prominent area of the cart.

The Room Condition 36 Element poster is required to be prominently displayed in an accessible "back of the house" area. Area must be accessible to all housekeeping and maintenance personnel.

Econolodge brand hotels are required to fully participate in the Room Condition Program. Although all aspects of the guest room and guest bathroom will continue to be inspected, special emphasis and extra point weight will be placed on the 36 Elements of Great Room Condition on the QAR.

You're GM and one other personnel from your property are to be certified in the Room Condition Program. The certification process will be available on [www.choiceuniversity.net](http://www.choiceuniversity.net).

As of **January 1, 2010** proof of certification must be maintained in a hard copy certification file that is available to LRA inspectors upon demand at any time for inspections. Certificates attained but unavailable for inspection and validation may result in point losses which cannot be changed or appealed.

The ELFA board takes great pride in the Room Condition Program for the future positive growth of the brand! Please be assured your ELFA board will be monitoring this program every step of the way!

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### **Room Condition Update– by, Mike Adams Room Condition Chairman**

The journey continues.....Everyone has received their room condition kit, everyone should have attended a room condition meeting, either at convention, or at the fall meetings in your region. Have you presented the room condition program using the kit to your housekeeping staff?, to maintenance staff? If not do not delay any further. As of November 1, 2009 all inspection will be heavily weighted toward the 36 elements of room condition. Your ELFA board has worked hard along with Comfort, Quality and Choice to make this program work for all properties. Each property should be doing their own inspection to determine where they have to improve. Don't wait for an LRA inspection.

Also, all properties will have to have at least 2 people from the property including the GM certified in room condition. This certification is on Choice University and will be free of charge. You can take the test as many times as needed.

Your BPC can assist you in preparing for the room condition program. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

If you fail your inspection, there is now a \$!700, re-inspection fee and you will have to write an action plan as to how you are going to correct your situation to become passing.

Marginal properties (those that just pass) will also have to write action plans. We have to do better and now is the time.

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## Room Condition Program off to a Great Start!

By Choice Hotels International

### Focusing on the 36 Elements that Matter Most to Guest

The Room Condition Program was created based on extensive research with guests and potential guests who said that there are 36 elements they evaluate when judging great Room Condition. In July, the Room Condition tool-kit was sent to all Econo Lodge brand hotels for implementation of the program. The resources, training materials and tools that were developed to support the program provide Licensees with everything they need to ensure great Room Condition at their property.

Reactions to the training materials have been overwhelmingly positive. In particular, hotels find the 36 element checklist to be an invaluable resource to keep them focused on the elements that matter most to guest. The checklist provides very detailed definitions of the 36 elements of great Room Condition and can be used by hotels to self inspect the guest rooms when evaluating how well they have been cleaned.

*"The training materials help a lot because now as I hire new housekeepers, I show them the video and they know what I expect them to do in the room. They look at little details like the lights and the linens to know how they should be cleaned."*  
Juana Collado, General Manager, Econo Lodge, VA 204

Although implementation across hotels is only weeks old, several hotels have reported seeing positive results after implementing the Room Condition Program.

*"For us in our experience we achieved a 1.5 bump in our LTR and our Room Condition scores which represents about a 15% improvement."* Michael Allen, Owner, Econo Lodge, VA204

### Training Test Certification Required for Comfort Inn, Quality and Econo Lodge Hotels

One of the primary goals for the Room Condition Program is providing guests with a consistently great Room Condition experience. Effective January 1, 2010, Econo Lodge brand hotels must have the General Manager and one other associate pass the Room Condition Certification Test located on Choice University ([choiceuniversity.net](http://choiceuniversity.net)). The purpose of the Room Condition Certification Test is to ensure that the General Manager (GM) and one additional staff member have completed the training, have a basic understanding of the program and know the importance of offering great Room Condition. The certificates of completion for both associates are required as part of QAR inspection.

### Room Condition Compliance Tied to QAR

On November 1<sup>st</sup>, the QAR process changed to measure compliance for the mandatory items required to be implemented as part of the Room Condition program. In addition to placing greater weight on the 36 elements of Great Room Condition, the QAR will also inspect hotels on the required components of the program which include:

- § The "Guide to Great Room Condition" cart cards properly mounted on every housekeeper's cart,
  - § The Room Condition 36 element poster hung in a prominent area in the back of house
  - § Printed Certificates of Completion of the Room Condition Certification Test for both the GM and one additional staff member
- Hotels that fail to comply with these elements of the program will lose points during the QAR audit.

The follow up actions following the QAR will be dependent on the hotel's QAR score. Hotels that fall into the Marginal or Unsatisfactory category will be required to complete a Room Condition Action Plan Template. All other hotels are strongly encouraged to do so.

The Room Condition Action Plan Template is included as a part of the hotel's final QAR results on Choice Central. Please refer to the detailed instructions for locating the QAR and the Room Condition Action Plan Template. They can be found on Choice Central by clicking on your brand page and going to the QAR section. Step by step instructions for completing the Room Condition Action Plan Template can also be found on the same page.

### Elevating the Reputation of Econo Lodge Hotels

Elevating the reputation of our Econo Lodge brand in the eyes of guests is a top strategic priority for Choice Hotels. Compliance with the Room Condition program will go a long way in meeting guests' basic expectations for a clean room with everything in order and working properly. The key to achieving this goal is to offer a consistent experience for guests every day with every stay.

If you have any questions regarding the Room Condition program, please contact your Brand Performance Consultant or send an email to [roomconditionprogram@choicehotels.com](mailto:roomconditionprogram@choicehotels.com).



1-800-788-7416





## Marketing & Reservations Committee Update

Chair: Gary Koester  
 Vice Chair: Bharat Patel  
 Members: Mahendra Patel – ELFA Neil Bhakta - ROA  
 Leonard Richardson – ELFA Kay Collier-Pittman - ROA

**On-Line Travel Agencies (OTA):** The current negotiations with Expedia / Hotels.com represent a critical opportunity to reestablish control of our inventory and investments.

- We continue to support the efforts of Choice Hotels leadership, on our behalf, to ensure that formal relationships with OTAs are beneficial to our long term interests and control of our inventory and investments.
- We need highly visible efforts from Choice to regain and retain control our inventory distribution and pricing, directing guests to ChoiceHotels.com.
- We are encouraged by the support expressed by others in the industry.

Please continue to support our leadership in their efforts, and follow the progress through leadership communications and on ChoiceCentral.com

**Ongoing Marketing / Brand Positioning:** We continue to work with our Choice Corporate partners to improve effectiveness and efficiency in the use of our Marketing & Reservation Fund contributions.

- We observed the exceptional results of our Guest Contact Centers during our “Economy Brand Summer Sales Blitz” trip to the Reservation Center in Grand Junction Colorado. Their call conversion rate remains exceptional and improving.
- We continue to work with our advertising resources to allocate funds to the channels most effective and efficient for our Brands.... which is rapidly shifting further toward internet channels and away from traditional media, following the clear trends of our customer booking habits.
- Participation in corporate Brand Positioning planning for Econo Lodge and Rodeway have been constructive and will lead to increased focus in future marketing efforts.
- Our efforts to increase the percentage of our funds spent on “advertising buys” remain an ongoing challenge.

Our objective of strengthening our position in the Choice Family of Brands continues with the acceptance of the recommendation to produce a single “multi-brand” directory for 2010 being a significant step. We expect continued improvement in product consistency to open more doors and opportunities.

**Creative, Effective, Efficient Marketing:** We are always searching for creative, effective and efficient marketing initiatives that are consistent with the character and positioning of the Econo Lodge Brand.

- The 2009 Econo Lodge Local Billboard Program that aims to display the new Econo Lodge logo on 100 new billboards across the country is a great example. To date, 86 new billboards have been committed with \$250,000 in marketing funds available to supplement licensee investment. These new billboards will assist in increasing awareness of the new logo and driving guests to our properties.

**What is the next creative idea????**

**Send us your thoughts and ideas !!!**



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### The LEADER Service Recovery Formula

By, Choice Hotels International

We have all heard a great deal about how we must go the "Extra Mile" to exceed customer expectations. Even though we've all heard this, it warrants reinforcement; exceeding customer expectations is more than just providing quality service. The Leader Service Recovery Formula is simply what we must do if we want customers to be loyal.

- **Listen**
  - Listen carefully without interrupting the customer
  - Give the guest your full attention
  - Make sure the customer has a chance to share their concerns and frustrations
- **Empathize & Apologize**
  - Let the guest know you understand why they are frustrated
  - Acknowledge their concerns or problems
  - A sincere apology can go a long way
  - Give verbal nods to let the customer know we hear what they are saying
  - Express sincere concern
- **Ask questions**
  - Find out what specifically happened
  - You want to respond quickly but you also need a full understanding of what the problem is
  - Reconfirm the information received for correctness
- **Don't justify or make excuses**
  - The guest wants a cure not excuses
  - The guest isn't concerned with your problems
  - The guest doesn't care about your franchise agreement
  - You are the brand to the guest

- **Engage a course of action**
  - Let them know how you will correct the problem
  - Provide them with possible solutions
  - Ask the guest how they would like to see the issue resolved
- **Review Resolution and Follow-up**
  - Second call back to guest to make sure problem has been fixed to their satisfaction
  - Reduced time to respond to the problem
  - Handling more problems while guest is still the hotel

#### The Top 5 Things You Can Do To Prevent Customer Relations Issues:

1. Manage inventory wisely; avoid overbooking or having to walk guests.
2. Respond to all Customer Relations issues promptly and in writing.
3. Empower your front desk staff to resolve issues before they become bigger problems.
4. Don't just clean rooms, inspect them.
5. Review the guest's rate at check in & have guest review folio at departure.

#### Key Points to remember

- Service Recovery can make a difference to your bottom line
- Use the LEADER system to resolve guest issues
- Avoiding problems altogether might be more work up front, but it can help reduce guest complaints
- Use Choice's resources to get the most out of your investment

### Co-op Update

By, Manish Desai Co-op Committee Chairman

So many of our licensees are choosing to opt out of Co-op advertising, due to a lack of understanding and information. Co-op is a very important tool to help increase your bottom line in this current economy, as each additional room you can rent is revenue for your hotel.

Individually marketing your hotel in this current economy isn't a possibility, Co-op advertising allows you to market directly to your client, locally, regionally, and economically. The average Co-op membership runs only \$600-\$900 annually, and for less than \$75 per month your hotel too can receive the benefit of direct marketing.

Starting in January 2010, there will be a shift in the e-commerce side of our Co-op marketing. eighty percent of the funds received will be used for co-branded online marketing---combining both mid-scale and economy brands hotels with Choice, matching this contribution dollar-for- dollar. The remaining 20% will be used for print marketing (i.e. hotel coupons, travel guides, etc.) and I am currently encouraging our Associate President's Natu Patel, ELFA President and Neil Bhakta, ROA President to consider using the remaining funds for Economy Brand Marketing on a regional level.

If you have any questions about Co-op marketing or how you can get involved, or any other comments, please don't hesitate to contact your Regional Director, myself at (334) 444-5414 or our Executive Director Ross Almo at our Association offices at (802) 786-2260.



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## ELFA ROA 2009-2010 Committees

### **Executive Committee/Joint Association Committee/Allied Vendor**

**Committee:** ELFA Chairman: Natu Patel, ELFA Co-Chairman: Mahendra Patel ELFA Members: Katen Patel, Hasu Patel, Mike Adams, Manish Desai, Bharat Patel ROA Chairman: Neil Bhakta ROA Members: Amit Patel, Sam Patel, Kay Collier– Pittman

### **Fall Regional Task Force Committee:**

ELFA Chairman: Natu Patel, ELFA Co-Chairman: Mahendra Patel,  
ROA Chairman: Neil Bhakta, ROA Co-Chairman: Amit Patel

**QAR Standards and Room Condition Committee:** ELFA Chairman: Katen Patel,  
ELFA Co-Chairman: Manish Desai, ELFA Members: Natu Patel, Mike Adams, Hasu Patel, Bharat Patel, Kal Master, Amrish Patel, Dilip Vekaria, Sila Patel ROA Chairman: Amit Patel, ROA Members: Neil Bhakta and Sam Patel

**Technology and ELFA.org Committee:** ELFA Chairman: Kal Master, ELFA Co-Chairman: Dilip Vekaria ELFA members: Amrish Patel, Natu Patel, Gary Koester, Katen Patel  
ROA Chairman: Sam Patel, ROA Members: Neil Bhakta and Amit Patel

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