



CHOICE HOTELS INTERNATIONAL

Spring Issue 2007

Franchise Associations



### ELFA President Leonard Richardson

As this is my last address as the President of ELFA, I would like to take the opportunity to publicly thank this outstanding Board of Directors for the very thoughtful and sometimes difficult decisions which we have made together. This is a group of independent minded business people, men and women, that volunteer their time and energy to work on behalf of all of us as franchisees; to improve, defend, represent, and compromise on the issues and opportunities to move the Econo Lodge Brand forward.

I am well aware that there are those of you in our system that are furious at us for agreeing to HSIA initiatives or ChoiceAdvantage mandates. There are also those of you who believe we did not go far enough in working to tighten standards and force out the bottom 25% of properties. I am confident that in the end, we have a membership committed to providing those services and amenities most in demand by our guests, able and willing to be among the leaders in the Economy lodging segment.

passion he brings to work on our behalf. He is a huge asset to this organization and I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with him.

I cannot close out my term as President without thanking Sandhya Patel. She briefly led this Association prior to her passing in February of 2006 and was as passionate as any among us about ELFA, and about us as individuals. She was a dear friend of mine; I still miss her every day. The Board meetings have not been the same without her bright smile and serious work ethic, but I have tried to carry her passion and her agenda for this organization as best as I could. I think she would be pleased at the Board's approach and progress on her unfinished work.

The Board of Directors will meet at convention and elect from its ranks a new President and new officers to serve under that selection. It is my intention to support that person, to work with and for that President, and offer advice if asked. I would ask each of you to do the same, and ELFA will carry on doing the work important to each of us, in its own unique, often acrimonious, always rewarding style. Thanks so much to all of you!

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Pushing this brand in the right direction, with the goal of increasing top line and bottom line revenues at the property level, sounds like something we can all agree on. How to get there, what road to take, which decision is the best for all of us, is hardly quite that simple. Your Officers and Directors have had some rather heated exchanges, have had loud arguments with Choice Hotels, and been disappointed, frustrated, angry and bitter more times than I care to remember. However, in the end, we all come to the realization that this process is not about individual pursuit or acclaim. It has always been, and will remain, about moving Econo Lodge as a system in a positive direction, to maintain positive growth, and leave it better than we found it.

It has been a true pleasure to have been able to serve as your President for this Association and I also need to thank you all, as members, for the opportunity. Nothing has been more pleasurable to me than fielding a phone call from a member with a difficult issue, and to be able to assist in resolving that issue.

I wish to also thank our Executive Director, Mr. Ross Almo, for his organizational skills, and his depth of knowledge on almost all issues, for assisting in keeping myself, and this Board, on task and informed. It truly would have been an impossible task for me to do this job without him, and I cannot express in words my admiration and respect for him for the job he does, and for the manner and

## Convention 2007 Update By: Anne Madison

#### Theme/Education :

Choice Hotels International's 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention is scheduled to take place May 9 - 11 at the Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center in Kissimmee, Fla . The theme for this year's convention is: *Taking It Higher...Together* and attendees can look forward to an exciting Corporate Business session featuring Chuck

Ledsinger and Tom Brokaw, keynote speaker; individual brand sessions, educational sessions focused on 5 different tracks and the Marketplace which will highlight products and services from over 260 vendors. Vendor Tradeshow The Marketplace will feature over 260 vendors and will be open on Thursday from 11am-5pm and on

Friday from 9am-3pm. **New format :** The format of this year's Convention has been changed—in part because of franchisee feedback. Beginning this year, a Welcome Reception for all convention attendees is scheduled to take place on Wednesday evening. In addition, the Inn Of The Year Dinner will take place on the

first night of Convention. The move will allow for greater recognition of all Inn Of The Year Winners throughout Convention and will also allow for uninterrupted educational sessions over the final two days of the gathering punctuated by the Closing Celebration on Friday—the final day of Convention featuring Earth Wind and Fire.



## Brand Team



**Jay Sigona** serves as senior director of franchise operations for worldwide lodging franchisor Choice Hotels International (NYSE: CHH). In this role, Mr. Sigona is responsible for the programs and procedures which support property level consistency. His duties in this position include maintaining Rules and Regulations, portfolio management and support of franchise sales and performance functions.

During his 14 year tenure at Choice, Mr. Sigona has served in a variety of roles within the organization, starting as quality assurance director in 1993. After two years, Mr. Sigona became a manager of quality assurance until 1998, at which point he changed position again, serving as director of franchise administration for the north market area. He most recently served in the role of regional vice president of franchise services for the central service region for a period of six years beginning in 2000.

Prior to joining Choice in 1993, Mr. Sigona served in various positions of hotel management for both the Waterford Hotel Group of Waterford, Connecticut and the Koala Inns of America Corporation of Boston, Massachusetts.

Mr. Sigona holds an associate's degree of applied science in hospitality from Paul Smith's College of Arts and Sciences in Paul Smiths, New York. He also holds a certification in hotel administration from the American Hotel and Lodging Association.

**Kevin J. Bradt** is division president, economy market brands for worldwide lodging franchisor Choice Hotels International (NYSE:CHH). In this position, he is responsible for brand strategy, brand operations, franchise development and brand performance services for the company's Econo Lodge and Rodeway Inn brands, which include more than 1,200 properties in the United States.

Mr. Bradt joined Choice Hotels in May 2002 as director of franchise sales. In 2002 and 2003, he was recognized as a top performer and ranked in the top three in overall sales. In 2004, he was promoted to senior director, brand strategy.

During his tenure at Choice, Mr. Bradt has consistently led the company's economy brands to record growth in system revenues, franchise sales and royalty revenues. His many successes include a variety of brand initiatives to upgrade the amenities and guest experience for Econo Lodge—from a new national breakfast offering to complimentary wireless Internet access. In addition, he played a key role in the design, implementation and launch of choiceAdvantage, the company's new web-based property management system.

Through his effective leadership of the Rodeway Inn brand, Mr. Bradt has orchestrated a significant turnaround—increasing the brand portfolio by 64% over a three-year period. Among his turnaround strategies were the introduction of a new fee structure for Rodeway Inn in 2005, which resulted in record sales for the year (and a 203% increase over the same period in 2004). The new fee structure helped to revitalize the brand and give it a higher profile with hotel developers, and in June 2006, Choice recognized Mr. Bradt for his achievement by presenting him with the company's annual award for Creativity and Innovation.

Prior to joining Choice, Mr. Bradt held a variety of sales and marketing positions for two major lodging companies, including director, franchise sales for Hospitality Franchise Systems (Cendant), and director of franchise sales for US Franchise Systems, and was consistently recognized for top sales performance.

He has a proven track record in sales management, finance and product development, most notably as regional sales manager with Nike, where he successfully led a team of 15 sales and marketing representatives.

Mr. Bradt earned his bachelor's degree in finance from Loyola University of Chicago, and his masters in marketing and finance from Pepperdine University, Graziadio School of Business. In addition, he received his post masters certification in Global Enterprise Management from Oxford University.



**Shane Platt** serves as vice president of franchise sales and development for worldwide lodging franchisor Choice Hotels International (NYSE:CHH). In this role, Mr. Platt is responsible for leading the growth and development efforts for the economy market brands division, which includes the Econo Lodge and Rodeway Inn brands, throughout the United States.

Mr. Platt joined Choice in 1996 as a Regional Vice President based in Dallas, where he sold franchises and managed a team of sales professionals in Texas and Oklahoma. He was later responsible for leading a franchise sales team in the Southeastern United States based in Charlotte, where he managed the sales efforts of all brands through the end of 2000.

In May of 2000, Mr. Platt served as vice president of development for Escape Enterprises, based in Columbus, Ohio, where he oversaw the franchise sales efforts for Steak Escape. Steak Escape is a fast food cheese steak franchise primarily located in malls.

Mr. Platt returned to Choice in 2003 as director of franchise sales and three months later moved to regional vice president of Quality and Clarion for the Eastern United States. He most recently served as a regional vice president for the Comfort and Sleep brands in the Eastern United States in 2006, managing franchise sales efforts.

Prior to joining Choice in 1996, Mr. Platt served as director of franchise sales and development for HFS Corporation, Inc. where he sold new construction franchises for Days Inn and Ramada brands in Arizona, Utah and Nevada.

Mr. Platt graduated from Purdue University in 1990 with a bachelor's degree in communication and minors in English, business and supervision.



**Rob Hottle** is vice president of brand performance, economy market for worldwide lodging franchisor Choice Hotels International (NYSE: CHH), where he is responsible for brand performance services for the Econo Lodge and the Rodeway Inn brands, which include more than 1,200 properties in the United States.

Mr. Hottle joined Choice Hotels in 1990. Formerly regional vice president, north service region for Choice Hotels, he provided services to hotels in the region focusing on revenue enhancement, quality assurance, training, operational assistance and openings.

Mr. Hottle began his exciting career in the hospitality industry managing a 123 room Econo Lodge in Beckley, West Virginia.



**ELFA & ROA Welcomes  
Tim Shuy  
Choice Association Liaison**

Tim is a 17 year veteran of Choice Hotels management. He has served in many capacities including ; Vice President Human Resources , Vice President Economy Brands and most recently Vice President Fair Franchising. Tim was the first " Brand Manager" hired by Choice Hotels and that time worked exclusively with the Econo Lodge Brand.

Tim is a graduate of Georgetown University and lives in Washington DC.



**Liz Clendenin** serves as senior director of brand strategy for worldwide lodging franchisor Choice Hotels International (NYSE: CHH). In this role, Ms. Clendenin is responsible for driving brand strategy for the economy market brands division, which includes the Econo Lodge and Rodeway Inn brands. Her responsibilities includes consumer positioning, franchise and board communications and brand amenity strategies.

Ms. Clendenin joined Choice in 2007. Prior to joining Choice, Ms. Clendenin served as senior brand manager for AOL. In that role, she was responsible for leading new product innovation and consumer engagement strategies for the security and support products within AOL's subscription service

Previously, Ms. Clendenin served as an associate brand manager on the Caress and Snuggle brands for Unilever.

Ms. Clendenin received a bachelor's degree in psychology from Duke University. She also holds a master's degree in business, with a concentration in marketing from the Kenan-Flagler Business School at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

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**Get Educated to Improve Hotel Operations  
During Convention**

**By : Jill Jones**

At Choice, we're always working to provide you with information and resources to help you run your hotel in the most cost efficient manner, with the greatest impact on guest satisfaction. We will continue to offer you this and more at the 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention in Orlando this May through several education sessions that you won't want to miss. Whether you are interested in how you can reduce costs through energy efficiency, simplify the issue of insurance, solve maintenance challenges quickly and effectively or motivate your housekeeping staff to provide a better guest experience, you will be able to learn this and much more at any of the following education sessions:

**Be Smart About Your Hotel's Insurance**

Insurance can be a complex topic. If you are like most hoteliers, you may be fed-up with the changing rules, aggravating complexities, and overwhelming expenses associated with insurance. Come hear a panel of experts simplify the subject and offer cost saving solutions.

**Maintenance Tips That Will Save You Money**

Get quick, money saving, maintenance solutions for your hotel. This session will cover several topics and offer hands-on demonstrations in the areas of: Curb Appeal, Electrical Repairs, Plumbing Problems, Heating & Cooling and Preventative Maintenance.

**Housekeeping Techniques that Will Extend the Life of Your Investment**

Learn how to motivate your housekeepers and help them do a complete and thorough cleaning in every room.

**Increasing ROI Through Energy Efficiency**

Make smart business decisions that can save you money every day. This educational session targets a wide array of energy efficient technologies and services, all designed to create cost savings in your property.

For questions or more information from Brand Solutions please call 888-797-7911.

\*Check the Convention Program for dates and times of all educational sessions.

# WHAT IS EARN? By: Bill Lawrence, BPC

For the past several months, the Economy Brand Performance Team has been meeting with hotels all over the country in what have been called EARN sessions – Econo Area Revenue Networks. Each session is dedicated to growing your hotel's overall revenue. The first of three sessions start with a property specific binder focusing on five different sections- Revenue, Calendar, Sales, Customer Service and Brand Initiative. This focused consulting by the Brand Performance Consultant is giving many hotels an opportunity to have a new set of eyes look at their property and markets. Brand Performance Consultants (BPC) begins with looking at the property Marketing Information Summary (MIS), which is the foundation of how your hotel is viewed by the CRS, GDS and Third Party Web

sites. By working with the hotel, the BPC makes focused recommendations about your property regarding rate positioning, SRP participation, room amenities codes and sales text. As one Franchisee recently told me during the Boston EARN session, "I can't operate my Econo Lodge like I did 10 years ago because there are too many more hotels in my market". He is exactly correct and now understands his hotel better now thru the Management Reports, Denial Reports and STAR Reports' used in this section of the session.

The Calendar section allows the hotel record all special events, sold out dates in their market, and allows them to use this with the BPC as a reference tool for setting rates for the next 18 months.

During our Sales section, we review the hotels ebrochure and talk about the new photo initiative that will shortly begin. We also discuss how keywords are important, and the importance of keeping that information current. We review with the hotel the recent Rescoach scores and discuss how to improve those. One of the best ways to improve is to make sure that each Front Desk person is reviewing the training programs that each Econo Lodge has been provided. Make this part of the first weeks training for all new employees and a refresher each year.

In reviewing the Customer Relations section, we discuss areas where hotels can improve. One of greatest ideas that was shared in the EARN in New Haven, CT was hotels on Choice Advantage should be

getting email address, and emailing the guests confirmations to future guests so that they understand the cancel policy, and this will reduce the no-show complaints. The emailed confirmation explains the hotels cancel policy, and it also gives the guest the opportunity to answer a Guest Insight Survey (GIS).

Our final area is to review and discuss the new Brand Initiatives that are currently announced, and how these will impact our guests and strengthen the brand for the future.

If you have not attended your EARN session yet, I would recommend you contact your BPC today, and find out how your property can make more revenue.

## Summer Means More Guests

Hi everyone, I know that summer is just around the corner. This means more guests coming to your property. Would you like to increase that number?

On June 18<sup>th</sup> Rodeway Inn and Econo Lodge Franchisee Associations will be hosting a day with The Reservation Agents in Minot, North Dakota. Two years ago when the Economy Brand Associations hosted a day with The Reservation Agents our bookings peaked for three weeks and our demand was higher than normal the following month.

I would like to encourage all Econo Lodge and Rodeway Inn hotel owners and/or sales personnel to come and join us in Minot, North Dakota. We will be flying out on June 16<sup>th</sup> and flying home on June 19<sup>th</sup> (to save on air fares). If you are able to attend please coordinate

with Ross Almo at:  
1-802-786-2260.

If you cannot come please consider bringing 100 rack cards, brochures, and/or promotional gifts to convention at the round table meeting or sending to:

Ross Almo, ELFA/ROA, 51  
Route 4, Mendon, VT 05701.

We will be glad to display your items and hand out your promotional gifts to encourage The Reservation Agents to book Economy Brands and your particular property.

I look forward to seeing you in Minot, North Dakota on June 18<sup>th</sup> or promoting your property if you cannot attend.

Thanks,

Kay Collier-Pittman  
ROA Past President

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# RODEWAY

## OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Springtime is bursting with color and change as it blooms throughout our regions. Spring brings a new freshness and beginning to our minds. Our Rodeway system is no different. We are blooming with excitement about new structures, events and programs that will be launching in the next few months. Our Rodeway system is extremely proud of the highest total properties in our brand history which has reached 235. An enthusiastic thanks is extended to Kevin Bradt and his team in this benchmark achievement.

The new Economy Brand Marketing team of Rob Hottle, VP of Brand Performance, Liz Clendenin, Director of Brand Strategy; Jay Sigona, Franchise Operations; and Shane Platt, Franchise Sales offered a group presentation at our Owner's Council meeting in Las Vegas in early March. We are pleased to hear their ideas regarding franchise sales, Ea\$y Choice and the Choice Room and system operations. We look forward to more details about updating our Rules & Regulations. At the present time, you are able to access this information from Choice Central. The updated Rules & Regulations will be available soon, however, if you have questions in this regard please direct them to Jay Sigona.

Our Economy Brand is also pleased to announce the addition of the Brand Performance Consultants for each region. The consultants are trained to guide owners to enhance their quality control, sales and marketing and guest relations to their maximum potential. I encourage you to utilize the expertise of these individuals for the benefit of your property development. One way in which our consultants can assist us is in quality control of housekeeping and maintenance. This is an area that recent stats show our Rodeway brand can improve.

Our Rodeway Brand Team is continually working to differentiate us in our marketing as we move forward in the economy market. Some of the ways we do this include the following:

**Ea\$y Choice** properties and Owners will be adding a new incentive this summer. Each property should continue to promote Ea\$y Choice as it is an excellent tool to promote revenue at your property. More details will follow regarding the added promotion of discount travel coupons as a new phase of Ea\$y Choice promotion.

**Co-op Marketing** participation can advance your property by working together with other Choice brands in your region. You will be able to drive more business to your property and experience a great return at a minimum cost. All properties should participate in this program as it will also increase your revenue.

We are pleased that **Choice Advantage** is being utilized at more than four fifths of the properties system. This system has proven invaluable determining reservations and ultimately boosting sales and raising our ADR. We look forward to 100% participation in the coming months.

**Choice Room** is a way in which we can identify our brand by adding amenities that uniquely represent us. At the present time, we are conducting a survey that will help us determine the specific amenities that will best serve our Rodeway guests. Some amenities incorporated in the Choice Room are micro fridge, iron and ironing board, full length mirrors, bright lighting, levered faucets, high speed internet access, coffee makers, firm beds and alarm clocks. Many properties already have some of these amenities. You will be informed of the final item selection when it is confirmed by the council and the management team. The goal is for at least 10% of your property to be offered as a Choice Room.

We would like to thank **Matt Philbin** for his contributions as a board member of The Rodeway Owner's Council. He

gave our council and the franchisees in his region his best. He will be missed.

Rodeway is a sleeping giant, continuing to grow in numbers and visibility in the lodging industry. We will all continue to work together as a winning team to make us proud of our Rodeway Brand.

Jim Hu, President, ROA



### ROA WANTS YOU!

#### ROA Region 1 Director Needed

Northeast Region. This region includes the areas of DC, DE, CT, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VA, WV, and VT

If you are from one of these areas and interested in serving as a representative to the Rodeway Owner's Council, please contact:

Jim Hu  
james\_c\_hu@yahoo.com  
or call:

210-223-2951

or

Kay Collier-Pittman  
kaycdc@charterbn.com

or call:

865-453-2526

## Be Our Best Update By: John Thompson

The launch of the new Be Our Best customer care initiative last fall was successful in both elevating property awareness about the importance of connecting with each and every guest and in renewing our focus and commitment to delivering consistent guest service. The enthusiasm with which licensees across Choice have embraced the Be Our Best philosophy is both impressive and encouraging. Rather than a "three-year initiative" as originally planned, we believe an ongoing quest to be our best is in order.

So what's the next step in the quest to be our best? Since moving to the new brand-centric organizational

structure in January, we've given this considerable thought. At the risk of losing a bit of momentum the program had built up, we thought it wise to take a step back and consider the unique needs of each brand before continuing with a one-size-fits all approach. .... We now believe that while the ideology of being our best fits perfectly within the Choice culture across all brands, the specifics of how Be Our Best is defined and implemented within each brand will vary according to guest expectations.

For the **Full-Service** and **Mid-Market** brands, the next phase of Be Our Best will be the Driver's Ed

program – a series designed to help licensees recognize and manage key drivers of guest satisfaction. Look for the program launch at this year's convention in Orlando followed by new Be Our Best training materials every six weeks.

Meanwhile, the **Economy** brands are revisiting the delivery methods and program topics for the next Be Our Best phase. Guest service and satisfaction will continue to be reinforced with a strong focus also on product. Look for future Be our Best updates on the Choice Central brand page or from your Brand Performance Consultant.

Finally, the **Extended-Stay** division is helping licensees be their best by delivering CORE – a program aimed at the essentials of driving guest satisfaction. The CORE program will also focus on preventive maintenance and housekeeping. Look for future CORE updates on the Choice Central brand page or from your Brand Performance Consultant.

We are committed to making the guest experience a key differentiator for each of our brands and look forward to working with you and your properties in a never-ending quest to Be Our Best!

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at **Choice Convention,**  
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Hours: 3-5 p.m.



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## All U.S. Choice Hotels Will Receive Professional Photography By Choice Hotels eCommerce Department

Choice Hotels International is pleased to announce the launch of an initiative to pay for professional photography for all U.S. Choice hotels. The photographs will be used for the choicehotels.com ebrochure photo gallery and will also be sent to the global distribution systems (GDSs) and third-party websites. "Our customers have told us that up-to-date, descriptive, relevant and attractive photographs are a significant factor when selecting a hotel," says Mary Beth Knight, senior vice president, eCommerce. "A brand standard has been developed to ensure photography quality and consistency, and to help hotels best showcase their property. We believe professional photography will help our hotels become even more competitive online." Show Hotel, a Choice qualified vendor, has been chosen to execute this initiative based on photography quality, consistency and experience.

### Photo Package Information

Each hotel will receive a minimum of seven and a maximum of 15 photos. The following categories will be included, as applicable:

- Hotel exterior
- Standard room types
- Suites/specialty rooms
- Lobby/interior
- Breakfast area
- Restaurant
- Meeting/event space
- Fitness room
- Business center
- Pool/courtyard
- Miscellaneous

Choice Hotels International will own the full copyrights to all hotel photos.

Hotels will be photographed regionally beginning in April 2007. An estimated schedule is available on choicecentral.com > Marketing > eCommerce>Hotel Photo Initiative> Estimated Schedule.

### Preparation Instructions Will Be Provided

Show Hotel will contact hotels to schedule the photo shoot three to four weeks in advance and will provide the hotel with preparation instructions. It is important that hotels follow the instructions and that the hotel is ready to be photographed before the photographer arrives.

### Additional Photos and Virtual Tours

Hotels will have the option to purchase additional still images and 360-degree panorama virtual tours at specially negotiated prices. Hotels can coordinate these purchases directly with Show Hotel

### Contact Information

For questions about photo shoots, contact Shelly Gerber, director, Show Hotel operations, at 888-999-5880 or sgerber@showhotel.com.

For more information about the photo initiative and frequently asked questions, visit choicecentral.com. Follow this path: choicecentral.com > Marketing > eCommerce>Hotel Photo Initiative.

## New Property-Level eCommerce & Reservations Dashboard

By Choice Hotels eCommerce Department

Franchisees now have the ability to track and measure Choice Central Reservation System (CRS) performance using the eCommerce and Reservations Dashboard, a new Choice management report available on choicecentral.com.

The dashboard, which is accessible through Property Info Manager, represents a significant update to the Reservation Activity Generated report used by hotels to measure financial performance through the CRS.

Hotels can access the dashboard on choicecentral.com by going to Property Info Manager à Reports à eCommerce and Reservations Dashboard.

Features of the dashboard include:

CRS summary information including graphs displaying a hotel's total CRS revenue and share percentage for each channel (voice, choice-hotels.com, third-party websites and GDS).

Individual, detailed CRS activity reports by channel that include monthly and year-to-date revenue, ADR and room night information, including pre-calculated year-over-year variance by month and year-to-date.

Revenue graphs for each channel that allow hotels to quickly identify trends and compare business year-over-year.

Hotel ebrochure visits, never before available at the hotel level.

Expanded referring website information that allows hotels to see which websites are generating business for the month and year-to-date.

Expanded third-party website reporting, including separate reports for retail and wholesale business.

Tips and trends section to provide hotels with greater insight into industry trends and marketing opportunities.

Printer-friendly version.

Option for international hotels to view the report in local currency.

"The dashboard report makes it easy for Choice hotels to access, analyze and take action on CRS revenue and reservation information, especially through the electronic channels," said Maury Lundahl, Sr. Director Electronic Communications and Analysis. "Hotels can use this information to make intelligent marketing decisions, recognize important trends and identify opportunities for growth they may never have seen before."

The dashboard contains full-month information and is updated on the second of each month for the previous month. Historical hotel reports are available beginning with January 2005.

Contact eCommerce Analysis at ereporting@choicehotels.com with questions.

### Choice Hotels Photo Initiative Just the Facts

#### What is happening?

Choice Hotels is paying for professional photography for all U.S. Choice hotels.

#### Who is taking the photos?

Show Hotel, a Choice qualified vendor.

#### What is included in the photo package?

Each hotel will receive a minimum of seven and a maximum of 15 photos.

#### When will hotels be photographed?

Hotels will be photographed regionally beginning in April 2007. Details available on ChoiceCentral.

#### Who can hotels contact with questions about photo shoots?

Call Shelly Gerber, Show Hotel, toll free at 888-999-5880 or sgerber@showhotel.com.

### Just the Facts

#### What is the eCommerce and Reservations Dashboard?

A new report that tracks and measures Choice Central Reservation System (CRS) performance.

#### When is the dashboard updated with new information?

The dashboard is updated on the second of each month for the previous month.

#### How do franchisees access the dashboard?

##### Follow this path:

choicecentral.com à Property Info Manager à Reports à eCommerce and Reservations Dashboard.

## Co-op Marketing 2007: A Foundation for Success By: Maury Lundahl

Choice's 2007 co-op marketing program is focused on building a strong foundation for strategic success. This year, in response to the continued growth of the online channels, the co-op program has been directly aligned with Choice's eCommerce department. This alignment optimally positions co-ops to take advantage of new online marketing opportunities, develop strategic business plans that maximize revenue, and measure co-op results with greater accuracy.

Choice co-op initiatives for 2007 include:

### State website enhancements

Each state website will be updated with up to 10 pages of content and imagery, with more space focusing on key customer

or market segments (meetings and groups, business travel, pet travel, weddings, etc.). The new content will be optimized to help the state websites achieve better natural search engine results.

### New and improved Ad Builder

Choice is re-launching the Ad Builder site in May. The site will be easier to use, and will feature simplified processes with greater flexibility for creating a variety of collateral materials including rack cards, brochures, AAA templates and more.

### Continued online marketing management with HeBS

Choice co-ops will continue working with HeBS, a top industry e-marketing firm, for all keyword buys and banner campaigns. HeBS is proposing new online marketing opportunities to the co-ops, build-

ing on the highly successful results achieved in 2006. In fact, the co-op online banner ads were recently recognized as the "Best Hotel and Lodging Online Campaign" by the Web Marketing Association.

### Improved co-op reporting

Co-ops will see enhanced reporting in 2007, including expanded offline promotion reports, featuring revenue generated by promotion, as well as rate plan.

Choice is committed to the success of the co-op marketing program. By ensuring co-ops have the funding, strategic direction and tools necessary to compete at a regional and local level, Choice is supporting the co-op program in building a strong foundation for future success.

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### 3. Telcorp International

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\*For more information call Telcorp International at: 1-888-TELCORP (888)-835-2677

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M10/01

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN IMMIGRATION LAW**

### **1. What has changed with regard to enforcement of immigration laws?**

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and its Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) changed the government's enforcement strategy in the Spring of 2006. In the wake of a highly-publicized nationwide raid on IFCO Systems in mid-April of last year, DHS announced that it would be much more aggressive about enforcement, using the harboring, smuggling, and transportation criminal code provisions to go after companies knowingly employing illegal aliens. The penalty for violating these provisions can be up to 10 years in prison and/or a fine of up to \$250,000.

### **2. Has the law changed?**

The law remains the same today, but DHS and ICE are applying the more onerous criminal provisions of the law as part of their campaign to crack down on employers that employ illegal aliens. DHS has also changed its interpretation of the Social Security Administration mismatch letter and now takes the position that employers that receive the mismatch letter are on constructive notice that the workers listed therein lack authorization to work in this country.

### **3. What are the penalties for noncompliance?**

Under the present law, failure to complete the I-9 form properly can result in a penalty of \$110 to \$1100 per form. A first violation of the knowing employment prohibition can result in a penalty of \$275 to \$2200. Second violation penalties range from \$2200 to \$5500. Third violation penalties range from \$3300 to \$11,000, and at this stage the employer is at risk for criminal pattern or practice liability, which carries a penalty of six months in prison and a fine of \$10,000. If DHS or ICE uses the criminal provisions of the U.S. Code prohibiting smuggling, harboring, concealing, or transporting illegal aliens, the penalties can be much higher.

### **4. Is there a possibility of arrest and indictment for criminal conduct?**

Yes, but this is unlikely for most employers who are trying to comply in good faith. Employers that turn a blind eye to illegal workers or that completely ignore I-9 compliance are more likely to be accused of pattern or practice violations, or worse, smuggling or harboring violations.

### **5. Are certain industries more likely to be targets of enforcement?**

Yes, employers in the construction, agriculture, hospitality, garment, and food processing industries employ higher percentages of foreign and illegal workers. Renewed enforcement efforts will most likely focus first on those industries.

### **6. Will employers be liable for contractors and staffing company employees?**

As a general rule, employers should not be liable for contractor compliance. DHS has brought criminal proceedings against employers that ignore actual knowledge that a contractor's workers are illegal. In addition, employers that knowingly steer illegal aliens to contractors because they can't be hired directly, face knowing employment liability and possible criminal sanctions.

### **7. What should employers do now?**

Prudent employers will undertake a review of hiring and enrollment procedures to make certain they are getting I-9 forms done correctly. It would also be wise to review the status of I-9 compliance and conduct self-audits to ensure that the forms are properly completed. If in doubt, get expert help, but do not contact the government for assistance.

David Whitlock is a lawyer with Fisher & Phillips LLP, a nationally recognized firm representing management in labor and employment matters. He can be reached at (404) 240-4210 or at [dwhitlock@laborlawyers.com](mailto:dwhitlock@laborlawyers.com). This information provided is general and educational and not legal advice. For additional information go to [www.hospitalitylawyer.com](http://www.hospitalitylawyer.com).

**By David Whitlock, Esq.**



## **What Do All Hotels Have In Common?**



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## Nobody Asked Me, But... No. 25

### **Guestroom Design & Amenities, Get a Human, Best Luxury Hotels in the U.S., Turnpike, The Pineapple as Symbol of Hospitality, Fair Franchising, Quote of the Month**

1. Guestroom Design & Amenities- In the September 1912 issue of *American Homes & Gardens*, writer and futurist Harold D. Eberlein presented his predictions of the impact of air travel on American cities. Eberlein foresaw a proliferation of roof gardens on top of large hotels to provide pleasing views for guests. He also predicted that travelers could expect to find "clerks and bellboys posted on the top floor ready to attend to the immediate wants of tourists who have just arrived by airplane. "Aerial taxicabs" will circle like vultures over the hotel, "he wrote, waiting for a doorman to signal one of them to alight and pick up a departing guest."

Eberlein's fanciful but inaccurate prediction of the future shows just how difficult it is to guess about the impact of technological innovations on hotel design and operations.

Wireless high-speed Internet access, that ubiquitous service that has taken the hotel industry by storm; has been or will be installed in most hotel guestrooms as well as public spaces, in economy as well as luxury hotels. Other hotels are installing net-based platforms that control everything from the concierge's wireless headset to water pressure; 40" LCD screens that do quadruple duty as a 5.1 virtual surround-sound theater, computer screen, satellite radio and digital art studio; touch-screen VoIP phones that schedule wake-up calls, retrieves your car from the valet, or-

ders breakfast and checks your flight status. While the hotel industry is connecting with wireless technology in a big way, there are still certain basic shortcomings in the average hotel room that can be corrected without additional technological breakthroughs.

Here is a description of the shortcomings of a one-bedroom suite in a large convention hotel where I stayed recently while attending a conference. It's unfortunately true that these shortcomings are also present in many hotel rooms in the United States.

The suite failed the Turkel blindfold test in that it looks just like every other guestroom, in a Marriott, Hyatt, Westin, Sheraton or Hilton hotel. There were no distinctive design elements to distinguish it from the competition.

The blackout draperies were inadequate to protect against the morning sunrise and allowed a "halo" of light to penetrate the periphery.

The two telephones were on the night table and on an end table next to the sofa. In either case, guests are forced to sit uncomfortably to make calls.

A low-quality clock-radio alarm was located on the night table. Today's guests care about the quality of music available. Incidentally, the alarm clock was difficult to program.

The lighting in the suite was totally inadequate with too few lamps and low-wattage incandescent bulbs.

The bathroom amenities (shampoo, conditioner and lotion) had print so small that you needed a magnifying glass to read them.

There were no hand-holds in the bathtub/shower and no curved shower curtain rod.

There was no filtered air and no filtered water.

There was no opportunity to skip daily linen changes.

There was no refrigerator or microwave.

2. Get a Human- Want to talk to a real person when you dial customer service? Before dialing visit <http://gethuman.com/us/> for shortcuts on how to bypass those automated operators and forever-on-hold telephone calls at various business calling centers. This website, staffed by volunteers and fueled by reports from more than 1 million consumers, offers specific phone numbers and instructions on how to reach living, breathing customer support workers at scores of companies providing goods and services. It also allows you to report your own "on hold" time. The site is updated weekly, but be aware that company telephone information can change without warning.

3. According to TripAdvisor, the ten best luxury hotels in the United States are:

1. Sofitel New York, New York, NY
2. French Quarter Inn, Charleston, South Carolina
3. Four Seasons San Francisco, San Francisco, California
4. Omni San Francisco Hotel, San Francisco, California
5. Reunion Resort & Club of Orlando, Celebration, Florida
6. J.W. Marriott Las Vegas Resort, Las Vegas, Nevada
7. Four Seasons Resort Maui, Wailea, Hawaii
8. Four Seasons Resort Lana'i at Manele Bay, Lana'i City, Hawaii
9. The Beverly Hills Hotel, Beverly Hills, California

10. Embassy Suites Hotel Portland Downtown, Portland, Oregon

4. Do you know that the word "turnpike" came from the practice of placing a pike or staff across a toll road. One side of the pike was imbedded with spikes. When the toll was paid, the pike was turned spikes down so the traveler could pass. The first turnpike was built between Philadelphia and Lancaster in 1792.

5. The Pineapple as a Symbol of Hospitality- In order to understand how the pineapple became the symbol for hospitality, we must return to Newport, Rhode Island in the 17<sup>th</sup> century founded in 1639 by settlers seeking religious freedom. Newport's majestic schooners participated in the infamous Triangle trade: ships would sail to western Africa to pick up slaves, continue to the Caribbean to trade the slaves for sugar, molasses and sugar and then back to New England. Along with these commodities, captains would bring home pineapples whose exotic nature and sweetness made them a rare delicacy in the colonies. Before emails or cellphones, sea captains would place the pineapples on their gate posts or over their doorways to inform neighbors that they had returned. Colonial hostesses would set a fresh pineapple as a centerpiece of their dining table when visitors joined their families in their homes. Later, carved wooden pineapples were placed over the doorways of inns and hotels to represent hospitality. The practice has continued to the present and frequently one sees the pineapple icon in hotels, restaurants and homes to signal an atmosphere of hospitality and welcome. Cont. next pg.

6. Fair Franchising is Not an Oxymoron- As every franchisee should know, franchise agreements developed by the legal departments of major franchisors are presented as boiler plate documents. There is little or no practical room for negotiation unless the franchisee is a major company. The greater the clout of the franchisee's company, the more likely it will receive serious consideration of beneficial adjustments to the franchise agreement. The most important contract elements are territorial protection and termination clauses. These are the most difficult *to negotiate especially with the largest franchisors which have the most one-sided licenses.*

However, there are other important clauses in the typical franchise agreement which hotel owners should negotiate: choice of law clause, statute of limitations, arbitration, no-jury clause,

sales/assignment/ transferability, merger & integration clause, right of first refusal, etc.

There may be no better way to negotiate a fair franchise agreement than to take the following two steps: 1) select a franchise company who believes in fair franchising 2) retain an experienced franchise lawyer who understands the important implications of these provisions.

Contact me for help with both of these steps.

#### 7. Quote of the Month

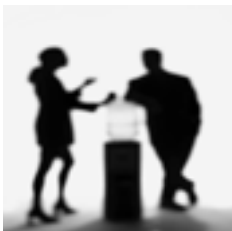
*"It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the ones most responsive to change."*

*Charles Darwin*

Stanley Turkel, MHS, ISHC operates his hotel consulting office as a sole practitioner specializing in franchising issues,

asset management and litigation support services. Turkel's clients are hotel owners and franchisees, investors and lending institutions. Turkel serves on the Board of Advisors at the NYU Tisch Center for Hospitality, Tourism and Sports Management. He is a member of the prestigious International Society of Hospitality Consultants. His provocative articles on various hotel subjects have been published in the Cornell Quarterly, Lodging Hospitality, Hotel Interactive, Hotel Online, AAHOA Lodging Business, Bottomline, New York Times, etc. If you need help with a hotel operations or franchising problem such as encroachment/impact, termination/liquidated damages or litigation support, don't hesitate to call 917-628-8549 or email stanturkel@aol.com

Stanley Turkel



## Around the Cooler with Bob

By: Bob Thompson

Well its time for the fat, bald, old guy to climb wearily up on his soapbox at the old water cooler and try and spout his words of wisdom to the general masses whether you want to hear these words or not.

The first order of business is the new corporate alignment of what use to be our FSD's. From what I think is a bad situation we ended up with a team of some of Choice's best: Rob Hottle and Jay Sigona. Trust me on this one. If ya get an e-mail or call from one of our 8 to 16 Representatives take it for crying out loud. Sincerely try working with these guys, they only have your best interest in mind. Now that I've done my bit of sticking up for corporate America I have a serious ques-

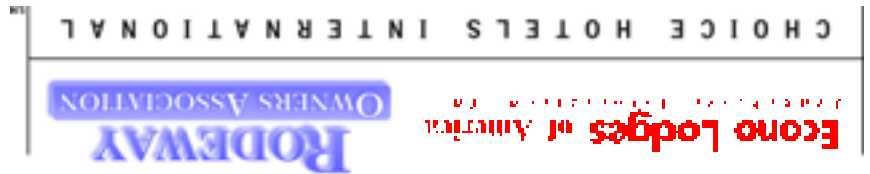
tion or two for the home office:

Has any one else noticed that there seemed to me an alarming number of departures from Choice corporate lately? By that I mean within the last two months we have lost our CO-CEO, CFO, Chief Legal Officer, and our President of Marketing who has left and returned. Why have they all resigned? Rumors are flying. Guys, this isn't making your customers [US] feel very confident and secure. Why doesn't someone step up to the plate and offer us some sign of stability and trust? How about some additional Co-op funds and advocating 10 Brand Advertising for Co-ops. That would be huge a confidence builder, and a little communication to the general population would go a long way.

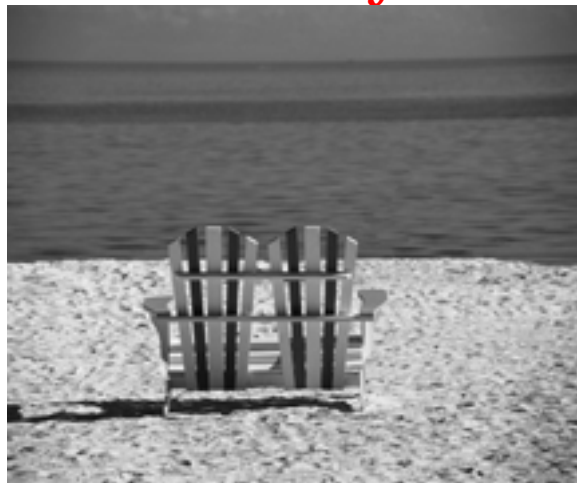
One more update for ya and then the fat, old bald guy will retire to his corner office for another nap. I promised I would keep ya up to date on how my negotiations with the home office was going since I last spoke to ya's. I can sum it up in one simple sentence: it is going so slowly that I will retire before we finally finish this mess. Word of advice to you properties that are just starting this process, be prepared for a lot of nothing. The bean counters in the home office have taken over and they just don't seem to care about anything,.

Well thats all I got for now, keep it civil, keep it clean and I'll see ya next time at the water cooler.

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