

Peace, love and happiness?

During Rich's trip to Amsterdam to attend HFTP's EHTEC he found time to do a tour of the very cool citizenM hotel downtown. Pictured with him is his tour guide and new best friend, Lucia. Now why in the world are they both giving the peace sign? It wasn't actually the peace sign. It was the number of coffee houses they visited during his trip to Amsterdam. *They weren't Starbucks!*



If you look to the right of this column you see that I work with four great women. I bring this to your attention because as we tried to come up with something creative on the cover to match Jon Inge's feature article revisiting guestroom technology, as often happens in our office we don't always agree. Believe it or not, the four women in the office loved the idea and I hesitated; would people find it too creative? Then I thought, this is our 18th year publishing on technology and we didn't survive by always playing it safe. Jon's article focuses on balancing the many technology initiatives focused on the guestroom and the conflict of what we need and how much we can spend. With this in mind, the cover conflict is perfect. Since you are reading this publisher's letter it did inspire you to open our magazine, right?

Of course, why you opened our magazine is also interesting to us. Since we publish three times a year, every issue becomes very valuable as a resource for the industry. We are aware of the trends toward less print, but that has been focused more on daily newspapers or high-frequency publications. Our print readers continue to grow. We are now read by over 29,000 in 106 countries. Since the launch of our digital edition last year we also have close to 9,000 subscribers receiving our magazine online. I know many of you have known me for all 18 years since I started publishing technology information out of my apartment with a 20-page newsletter on bright yellow paper. Yes, it has been an amazing journey.

So, how did you survive the economic crash of 2009? I have the luxury of being close to both those who buy technology and those who sell it. Trust me when I say, this year is going to be so much better with a renewed interest in technology investments. Maybe not to the level of a few years ago, but much better than what we experienced last year. Historically, when we go through a recession and investments are dramatically cut back, be assured the development of technology doesn't stop. Many will be in catch-up mode this year. If you are not looking at the trend toward cloud computing, visualization along with the changing needs of your guests, it will impact your bottom line. Read the article, "HD Effect" by Trevor Warner (page 46) as a perfect example. Yes, the world is changing.

Our world here at *Hospitality Upgrade* is also changing. When I started a little newsletter in 1992 I made one very important decision and that was not to use professional writers, but those who were experts in their fields. I encourage you to look closely at page 4 and the wide-reaching articles covered in this issue. We receive accolades on our editorial and we have always believed that was the No. 1 reason for our growth over the years. But when all is said and done, this is a business and we have bills to pay and we couldn't do that without the unbelievable support of our advertisers. As we all rebound from the last year, nothing today makes us prouder than recognizing those who continue to support our efforts. From a pure advertising standpoint this has been one of our biggest Spring issues in years. I have to believe that those who have joined us again this year should be looked at as true forward-looking providers of technology. And so we got a little creative on page 8 and have welcomed them to our continually expanding world. We thank them and thank you, our readers. This has been quite the ride for the last 18 years.

Yes, 18 years. I reflect on that 20-page newsletter on yellow paper, which led to a magazine, then to our first Web site, then Hotel Online, then the CIO Summit, the Executive Vendor Summit, the Benchmark Study on Technology Spending and now maybe the biggest thing we have ever done. We have enlisted the help of Bob Bennett to launch this initiative, which will be shared with the industry at HITEC this June in Orlando. I wish I could tell you more, but there will always be the paranoid part of me that has allowed us to succeed all these years. Wasn't it Andy Grove, the creator of Intel, who coined the phrase, "Only the paranoid survive?" Intel has done pretty well over the years so I guess he was on to something. I think we are too, and I look forward to sharing this with you in June. We look forward to seeing everybody at HITEC.

One final item, we have put a lot of time, energy and effort into redoing www.hospitalityupgrade.com. We have added many features and hope you will take a moment to check it out and take advantage of the new functionality. If you have white papers or case studies we will prominently post them for you. Contact Kate at kate@hospitalityupgrade.com for details. Thanks to all who have put up with my ramblings for the past 18 years and for your support.

Here's to a great 2010!

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Rich

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