

From the Publisher

By: Richard Siegel

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Have you ever had one of those days when your head starts spinning and just won't stop? Please, get those thoughts of Linda Blair in the Exorcist out of your mind. Two years ago while sitting at a hotel bar in Paris during the old EURHOTEC, a few of us were bouncing ideas around. Why is it the best ideas seem to come over cocktails?

Then last September, after finishing my interview in Chicago with Tom O'Toole, the CIO at Hyatt Hotels, the idea resurfaced. A few months ago I was having lunch with a couple of friends of mine at Six Continents and popped in to say hello to Doug Lewis, Six Continents' CIO, and bounced the idea off him. He was very, very supportive. Then I called Scott Heintzeman at Carlson (who is interviewed in this issue), Tim Harvey at Hilton Hotels, Mark Hedley at Wyndham, Bill Oates at Starwood, Tim Aubrey at Fairmont Hotels, Carol Beggs at Sonesta Hotels, Glenn Bonner at MGM/Mirage, Carl Wilson at Marriott International, Michael Hwu at Four Seasons, Mike Kistner at Best Western, Nick Price at Mandarin Oriental and the list goes on. All are respected CIOs. I bounced the idea off of all of them and they uniformly said, "Go for it." Hence The CIO Summit was born.

I am proud of what I have accomplished in my publishing career over the last 10 years and that I am able to make a living doing something that I enjoy. I think we all have a responsibility to give something back to those that have helped us along the way. Just about every CIO has helped me along the way. Many have been interviewed or have agreed to be interviewed in *Hospitality Upgrade*. They have always said yes when I need panelists for the CIO session I do at HITEC or other venues. When I need to clarify rumors or get the real scoop on an industry issue, they are always very generous with their time. I have been very appreciative of this; it makes my job and my life easier. Putting this CIO Summit together, which is a first for this industry, in my mind is a nice giveback to them. Of course I know my limits to what I can and can not do, so I am glad that Sally Kelly from KPMG has gotten her company to support this effort and be a key part of it. I swear I feel like a little kid who is excited about a vacation he is about to go on. Hey, we all need a little adventure in our life and I think this Summit is going to be quite a trip. For more information on what we will be doing there, please go to page 150 and this issue's Siegel Sez. I have written more about this event there.

I always get beat up when I suggest this, but I really wish HITEC were a couple of days longer. This is our 10th year publishing and naturally I have been doing a great deal of reflecting. My first issue had 12 advertisers in it, which I thought was great. Look at who is in this magazine today — isn't it unbelievable? We started in 1992 mailing *Hospitality & Automation* to 3,000 hotels. Today *Hospitality Upgrade* has 27,000 readers in 73 countries. Unfortunately, I don't get to visit with everybody as much as I would like to, so HITEC is my one chance to catch up with advertisers, readers and friends. With all that is going on at the show, it is nearly impossible for me to do this in just three days. Selfishly, I would love to see the show extended, what do you think? Would you?

Finally, if you are reading this issue and attending HITEC, please, please stop by our booth No. 330. If for no other reason than just to say hello. Dick Johnson from Hotel-Online will be there with us. If you by chance are not reading the daily e-mail from Hotel-Online.com, please sign up at the show or go to www.hotel-online.com and click on Enter Registration. The technology review that we do with Jon Inge has taken on a life of its own and continues to grow. We do all the work and deliver it to your PC — how simple is that? Also at our booth will be our new bride Charlotte (whose husband will be at the show, too), our newest superstar, Katharine Lee, and Geneva who many of you know is now “you-know-what.” Just promise me you won’t ask her if she is going to take any time off. I find that question quite uncomfortable.

Thanks again for all your support. One more issue and we will officially be 10 years old. Unbelievable!

Rich