
From the Center

An Invaluable Resource

I would like to make you aware of a resource that can provide invaluable information to people working in the hospitality industry and to those who study the industry. You might be thinking that the resource relates to research and be tempted to say, “Yeah, we know all about the value of research. That’s why we get the *Cornell Quarterly!*” True enough, but the resource I want to discuss here is your peers—other people who work in or study the hospitality industry. Rather than reading research published in a journal, I suggest instead researching the knowledge of your peers.

As any student in a professional master’s program will attest, much of the learning comes from other students in the class. Analogously, those of us working in or studying the hospitality industry can learn a lot from our peers. The challenge in making this happen is finding a venue that facilitates discussion. We at The Center for Hospitality Research are happy to announce that we now have that venue. It is our new Discussion Board, which you can find on the web at <http://www.hotelschool.cornell.edu/chr/bb/> (or just follow the link to the Discussion Board that you will find on the main Web site, <http://www.TheCenterForHospitalityResearch.org>). We launched the Discussion Board in December 2003 with the aim of providing “a forum for open discussion of issues facing the hospitality indus-



try” and started promoting it in early February of this year. One of the early users of the Discussion Board commented, “I would like to take this opportunity to thank The Center for Hospitality Research for starting the Discussion Board. It is a great initiative for bringing like-minded hospitality professionals [together] on a common platform.”

As I write this (in mid-February 2004), the discussion topics on the board have included the following:

- how to account for F&B coupons in a casino;
- the importance of hotel design to guests;
- the criteria hoteliers use when determining what communications systems to deploy in their properties;
- how restaurant managers deal with the problem of servers’ being unhappy waiting on foreigners, ethnic minorities, and other groups perceived to be poor tippers;
- liability issues related to food delivery;
- research on training and recruitment policies in the hospitality industry;
- companies’ ability to prevent employees from suing them in federal or state court by instead requiring arbitration;
- how reservations obtained via an online intermediary (e.g., Expedia, Travelocity, Hotwire) affect your hotel or chain and how these same reservations affect profitability compared with reservations obtained through other sources; and

- how to keep guests happy in resort destinations when the weather is inclement.

The success of the Discussion Board depends on all of us. I encourage you to visit the site, bookmark it, read the discussions, and post questions and replies. Col-

lectively, if we do this, we will have another avenue for improving the hospitality we provide to our guests and for improving our understanding of the complexity of and the challenges facing the hospitality industry—*G.M.T.*