

"The National"

Hotel Motel Engineer Association

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE HMEA

Wyndham Boston Chelsea



**Paul Freitas,
Chief Engineer,
Wyndham-Chelsea, MA**

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"The Make It Happen People"

Fall 2010

Issue 46



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Letter From The President

When we decided to go electronic with the magazine, I thought it would be an easy choice. We thought the main problem would be getting the publication to members and prospective members.

Much to my surprise it has been just the opposite. The emailing part comes easy. What is time consuming is the arrangement process once all the information is gathered. We are trying to revise most everything to fit into the new electronic era.

We have only been doing this a year so some things are falling into their proper places, but there is always room for improvement. All suggestions are welcome, just email us.

We plan to make an appearance on Twitter and Facebook and our target date for this is January.

We also need more repair articles with an emphasis on 'how to' for our website. Please email to renee_hmea@yahoo.com with a copy to hhogue3606@aol.com.

Our membership numbers keep improving and we will soon have a new Certification Training Program and testing. Since the economy is slowly improving, we plan to start our training and testing in local areas. Currently we are lining up the training and testing personnel.

Be a "Make It Happen People" and join the Hotel Motel Engineer Association.



Harold Hogue, President HMEA

"The National"

HOTEL MOTEL ENGINEER ASSOCIATION

"The make it happen people."

Fall 2010

October/November/December 2010

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Wyndham Boston Chelsea Hotel

I visited with Paul Freitas, Chief Engineer of the Wyndham Boston Chelsea Hotel in Chelsea, MA. Paul has been a member of the Hotel Motel Engineer Association since 2001 and has a dream – to retire in about a year. Paul has been with this property since it opened in 2001. Before the hospitality industry, Paul was self-employed owning a bowling alley in Lowell, MA for 24 years. He originally got in that business by working for Howard M. Dow, the inventor of the automatic pinsetter for the bowling industry. Florence, his wife of 49 years, opened a bed and breakfast for about 24 years and is in the process of selling it. Paul and Florence have essentially owned some type of business since they have been married. They have four sons and 11 grandchildren. One son is an executive chef and has been working for this company for 17 years. Another son works for a liquor distributor and another son worked in the motion picture industry for 11 years and returned to the hotel industry after 9/11. The other son is an executive at a nuclear power plant.

The property is neat and clean and the employees are happy, which is always a good sign. As I have said in the past, a winning attitude starts with upper management and goes all the way down through the ranks to all employees. This also makes for a good working atmosphere and, of course, happy employees result in a more positive and stronger guest satisfaction when any assistance is needed.

The hotel is a 180-room, non-smoking property. It has an indoor swimming pool and jacuzzi that are heated and available for use year round. Most all work performed such as maintenance, laundry, etc. is done in-house. There is no central air conditioning in the hotel, only ptacs. They plan on replacing all ptacs in 2011. He has three engineers to maintain the hotel assets including his assistant, Victor Rodriguez. Victor Rodriguez, Assistant Chief Engineer, has been with the property for three years. He is married to Martha Vega.

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H.M.E.A.

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The HMEA is not connected to an engineering firm nor do we do any engineering. Our publication is for the Head of Maintenance or Stationary Engineer of the Hospitality Industry.

They have two children ages 2 and 12. We talked a little bit about problems in the hospitality industry and one he has is that his smoke detectors are always coming up missing. The reason I'm mentioning this is because about 2:30 this morning I was awoken and had to evacuate the hotel due to a fire alarm. I thought that this was kind of hilarious because that particular smoke detector was not missing and there was no fire. Currently they use the detectors that have metal contacts but they will soon be replaced with plastic contacts.

This Wyndham has a service called "Park and Fly". A lot of airline personnel take advantage of this because they get a shuttle back and forth to the airport and can leave their personal vehicles parked at the hotel for free.

One thing I forgot to mention is that a number of hotels and motels now have or have had a bedbug problem. The Wyndham employees are heavily trained in prevention but they still get them as the normal mode of transportation for a bedbug is in the guests' suitcases. As a further precaution, a dog trained in bedbug detection is brought in at least every six months for an inspection.

Be sure and check out the property and personnel pictures as 'a picture is worth a thousand words.'

All in all, Paul Freitas is certainly one of our "Make It Happen People."



*14Service Area
Sea Mist Oceanfront Resort*

Article By: Harold Hogue

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7 Secrets Contractors Don't Want You to Know

By: Ronnie Tinsley

Contractors and Service Companies make more profit off of your business when you are not informed.

Secret #1 – Preventative Maintenance Programs actually pay for themselves in savings and offer a greater return on your investment instead of calling contractors out on an as-needed basis.

Secret #2 – Most contractors simply won't report areas of concern because they feel it is future "job security" for them if your systems continue to fail. In that regard, they usually don't have your best interest in mind.

Secret #3 – Contractors make more profit on service work when you "react" to a problem, especially during emergencies. When you are "proactive" about problem identification and resolving it promptly, contractors have to remain more competitive.

Secret #4 – With a simple check list you can spend a few hours a month identifying your problem areas yourself and prevent most major problems from

occurring by taking proactive steps.

Secret #5 – Most contractors don't want you to know that if you take care of your "little things" first, you'll prevent other "major things" from happening and avoid more systematic building and system failures.

Secret #6 – Most contractors don't offer energy-auditing services because they simply don't know how to perm them. Not knowing your potential energy savings from a commissioned audit could be costing you 10-70% more in energy cost.

Secret #7 – Most contractors only perform a single trade service. A Multi-Service company, however, can provide discounted or "bundled" service, construction and design solutions along with the conveniences of "one-stop shopping."

This Free Report has been provided by: Ronnie Tinsley, Vice President of Direct Air, Direct Electric, Direct Plumbing & Direct Maintenance.

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SBEMCO Rolls Out Recycled Floor Matting

By: Brian Buscher, President

Ultra Dry PCR PET is 90% post-consumer recycled polyester yarn making it one of the highest recycled yarn content matting products on the market!

Algona, Iowa - March 1, 2010 – Sbemco Matting By Design announced today the rollout of Ultra Dry post-consumer polyester yarn (PCR PET) floor matting. This recycled content floor matting product is one of the first of its kind and is manufactured from recycled plastic water bottles. A collaboration with Shaw Industries, Inc., the Ultra Dry PCR PET is the green alternative to polypropylene needle bond floor matting and according to test results, also outperforms polypropylene in wear and water absorption tests, and boasts the Radiant Panel Class One Certification fire rating.

“We knew we had a winner just from the look and feel of the product but we were even more thrilled when the test results came in” states Tony Rahm, head of Quality Control at Sbemco Matting By Design.

Ultra Dry PCR PET was designed to be a high-performance floor matting product utilized in high-abuse retail and property management areas. But durability is not its only attribute; it’s also environmentally responsible. Ultra Dry PCR PET is manufactured from recycled water bottles, eight bottles per square foot for an overall recycled yarn content of a whopping 90%! This makes Ultra Dry PCR PET one of the highest content of recycled yarn material of any matting product on the market. It also utilizes the heaviest recycled yarn currently available in any floor mat, and that quality is also part of its environmental responsibility. Because when properly maintained the Ultra Dry PCR PET floor mat will perform for years, at least six, according to the Factory warranty. However, with proper maintenance the product will perform longer, thus adding to its life-cycle costs and greatly reducing its carbon footprint.

“We’re an innovative company with high-quality products and we saw the next opportunity to expand as an environmental one. Too many yards of floor matting and carpeting are hitting the landfills far too

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quickly and it has to stop” states Brian Buscher, president and CEO of Sbemco Matting By Design. “We’ve always manufactured high-quality products that perform for years which is good for the environment because it reduces the need to produce new matting prematurely thus expanding the carbon footprint. Keeping plastic out of our landfills and reducing manufacturing processes is good for the earth and our business. What our customers get is a better wearing, better performing product that is kinder to planet earth.

The overall manufacturing process for Ultra Dry PCR PET breathable matting is unique and proprietary to Sbemco Matting By Design. Sizes and shapes are unlimited and there are no adhesives or frames required for the product to stay in place. And for those looking for LEED certification, Ultra Dry PCR PET floor matting will help you gain points in a variety of categories.

Matting By Design/Sbemco International is a 21-year old privately held company that specializes in the manufacture of custom floor matting products for the commercial marketplace. Customers include

—Continued on Page 8»»»

large retailers like Target and high-profile property management firms like Vornado Realty Trust. For more information on Ultra Dry post-consumer polyester yarn floor matting products, please contact Sbemco Matting By Design directly at 800-468-0860.

Article By:

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PTACs-Insider Renovation Tips For Engineers

By: Mo Siegel, President/Co-CEO, Ice Air®

Hoteliers have needs, not the least of which is assuring guest comfort. Perhaps nothing affects this assurance more than the room environment itself – and the ability to control the temperature within that room. Hotel engineers are charged with this task, and simplifying temperature controls while increasing energy efficiency has become a fundamental goal. By far, the Packaged Terminal Air Conditioner (PTAC) has been the unit that has emerged to fit the bill in terms of comfort, and energy efficiency, as well as cost and performance.

Since the '60s, the PTAC has been the staple heating-and-cooling system found in hotels. According to industry estimates, up to 80 percent of hotels/motels use PTACs in guestrooms. PTACs are designed to provide many years of efficient, hassle-free, user-friendly operation. The units are usually designed and manufactured to operate on 115 volt, 208/230 volt, or 265/277 volt, single phase, 60 hertz circuits. One of the attractive features of the PTACs for hotel engineers is that they are simple to replace. The replacement of old, obsolete units becomes affordable, and fast, as long as the manufacturer offers a full line of PTAC units. For example, over the years, different manufacturers have emerged (some are no longer in business) and created a variety of PTACs, each having different performance characteristics. When the hotel engineer is considering replacement of the PTACs within the facility, the facility itself may or may not have the same brand throughout. Therefore, it is important to find vendors that can accommodate that kind of flexibility and support the hotel/motel's requirements. In addition, finding a vendor that supports the latest efficiency and understands refrigerant guidelines is just as important. The PTAC manufacturer you select should be aware of the myriad requirements of PTACs and be capable of delivering state-of-the-art reliability and cost-effective upgrades to your existing facility, regardless of the original manufacturer involved. The hotel, in order to maintain guest environmental comfort, deserves a cooling and heating vendor that not only has such flexibility, but will be there to help maintain

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Get *ENERGY* Savings

By: Bill Seavey, PowerFromSun.com

Concerned about global warming? (Who isn't these days. Go to climatecrisis.net or myfootprint.org for more info). Or maybe you just want to do what you can for a few hundred bucks to make your home more energy efficient and save money on electricity and heating over the course of time. These ideas aren't all original, but they are sure to work. – Bill Seavey, PowerFromSun.com.

Put power strips (or possibly surge protectors) at as many outlets throughout your house as possible where electronics with “instant on” circuitry continue to draw energy while not in use. Six outlet strips are available for as little as \$3 each. This could save up to 5% or more of your electric bill.

Take a Solar Shower. It's a black bag filled with water you put out in the sun for a few hours and you hang in your shower. (I use it at my strawbale house in Mexico). Get one from RealGoods.com. If you have a two-story home, spend most of your time upstairs in the winter and downstairs in the summer. Heat rises through ceilings and cold sinks through flooring. Our two-story home in California is at least five degrees cooler downstairs, even with good insulation.

A cheap “double pane” window is stretching a fairly thick mil plastic sheet across the outside frame of your windows and sealing with duct tape (different colors available to possibly match your exterior colors).

Buy rechargeable batteries. I have both a solar charger and a plug in charger. The new lithium batteries can charge hundreds of times and are well worth it. NIMh batteries are cheaper but they are also extremely good. Buying non-rechargeable batteries of any kind is just a waste of money. Paint your roof white to reflect sunlight or install light colored singles (in hot climates). In colder climates consider a Green Roof, which is simply a layer of earth or sod which can be insulative. My white roof in Mexico has a layer of a very elastic compound which is also an excellent sealer. Why heat up rooms in your house that you are not using? Close them up and seal off heating vents. Divert the hot air in your dryer BACK into your home

for heating. We did this when my wife had a day care business in a converted garage where the dryer was installed. A handy \$5 device allows you to do this by switching from outflow to inflow. Watch for fumes, obviously.

Get “Great Stuff.” It's a can of an expandable latex substance that you can spray into cracks in molding, ceilings, joists, doors, etc.

Close all curtains at night to keep heat in and cold out – even if you have double pane windows. Windows facing the rising or setting sun should have curtains opened first. Shine the sun on black objects in the room (especially metal) that will heat up with the sun's rays.

Don't be among the only Americans who still haven't bought compact fluorescent bulbs for home lighting. A 15-watt screw in bulb can provide 60-75 watts of illumination and last much longer than tungsten bulbs. These bulbs are as little as \$1 each now at Costco, WalMart and OSH. LED bulbs will be 10 times more efficient than CFL's.

Replace appliances with Energy Star rated machines. But that's expensive (initially). To better insulate a large refrigerator or freezer from a hot garage or room, cover everything but the venting with 1-2” rigid foam panels. Your fridge consumes 9-20% of the electricity in your house.

In winter sleep with your pets, children, maybe even your spouse!

Make a solar cooker using aluminum foil, a wooden box and glass. If you don't want to do it yourself, get one from RealGoods.com.

A really cheap portable “air conditioner” is a clean spray bottle full of water – carry it around and spray it on your head, neck and extremities on hot summer days. Really works! There are also commercial “mistors” for sale with a pump for under \$25 at Costco.

You don't need a clothes dryer to dry clothes, although the tumbling and softening process does make your duds look and feel better. (But commercial softeners are often toxic). Clothes dried in the sun or on a line in a warm room will save you plenty

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Seeking Greater Convention Business

By: Dr. Peter Tarlow, *Tourism Tidbits*

Conventions, in the guise of trade shows, may be one of the earliest forms of capitalism. Ever since people have started to trade with each other there has been the need to gather together, exchange ideas and find new ways to present products, services or ideas. In today's world, conventions are big business. Ever since Biblical days, people have understood that selling a product means more than simply having a good product, it must also be presented well and in an accessible manner. One of the major mistakes of exhibits and trade shows is to crowd the room or have it so noisy that people simply stop thinking. Delegates not only attend the trade show part of the convention, now called the exhibit hall, but also often use their convention dollars as a way to turn a business trip into a semi-vacation. In fact it is not uncommon now for convention delegates to bring family members along with the idea of mixing business with pleasure. From the perspective of the travel and tourism industries conventions provide major economic boosts to the host community. Those working at convention/or attending them need great many services, from hotels to electricians, from good restaurants to transportation. Additionally, exhibitors may need freight services, in-house coordinators, and service personnel to set up and breakdown exhibits. In today's world, conventions also need a great deal of security not only to stop any pilferage but also to protect both those exhibiting at the convention and those attending it. In order to gain conventions and to get the most from your convention business, *Tourism & More* offers you the following ideas and suggestions:

-Determine if your city/locale is appropriate for a convention. What makes your locale special? What types of conventions would work for your community? What types of conventions might not match with the sociology of your community?
-Know who your competition is and what it offers. For example if you claim your location is centrally located then determine to what? The reality is that all communities are centrally located to someone else. What makes your location special? How good are your transportation arteries and how cooperative is local law enforcement in aiding needy travelers?

Remember that almost every city states that it offers old-fashioned hospitality and that its people are special. Most meeting planners interpret these statements to mean that your community has nothing special to offer.

-Do not seek conventions that are bigger (or smaller) than your city can handle. Often communities do not think through the logistics of a convention. If you are going to seek to attract a convention be sure to know what types of hotels you offer, how close restaurants are to the convention center and what services a convention center has. For example, is your convention center equipped with a communication center, does it offer land telephone lines or must both delegates and others depend on cell phones? How well do taxis service the center?

-Never promise a potential convention what you cannot deliver. Remind those seeking convention business for your community to make sure that what they promise is real and do-able. Meeting planners know all too well how to separate honest offers from the con artists. Always put your best foot forward and place a smile on your face. The reality is that you may never know what will win (or lose) you a convention's business. Treat each person as if this is the convention that will make or break your community

-If your convention center is close to a less than safe neighborhood, develop a safety plan with the local police department. It can take as little as one well-publicized incident to destroy a convention city's reputation. Work carefully with your local police department so that security is provided in a timely and courteous manner. In a similar fashion, do everything that is possible to enhance the landscaping and environmental beauty of the convention center's neighborhood. Remember that the neighborhood that surrounds your convention center is the one that makes the greatest impression on your visitors.

-Develop a cadre of local businesses, services and citizens who are willing to turn your community into a convention community. Remember that conventions make you money when delegates leave the convention center and go into the community. If your com-

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the equipment should an issue arise during replacement. Quality service, care and performance should be the guidelines you use in selecting your vendor and in developing your PTAC renovation strategy. For example, how long will delivery be? If you begin a schedule, are you assured that the vendor will support that schedule? Does the vendor have adequate inventory to support its commitment to you? These are critical questions to keep in mind when reviewing your PTAC replacement strategy – especially because of the length of time PTACs have been in use. Many hospitality facilities have been in existence for some time, and these buildings experience ongoing renovations throughout their existence. Over those years, the PTAC has proven to be the viable way to control the temperature in guestrooms. In some cases, facilities are “mixed use,” and in order to maintain world-class comfort for hotel guests and tenants, the PTAC has become the standard. The age of your facility, therefore, should play a role in which vendor you select for your PTAC replacement strategy. Consider that a hotel’s original heating and cooling equipment may be comprised of old, unattractive cast iron steam radiators or small, inadequate window units. When faced with the option to update the efficiency of the existing equipment, hotel engineers and management should select equipment that is as discreet, efficient and as quiet as possible. That usually means the PTAC, but not all PTACs are the same. For

example, wall sleeve sizes, older PTAC units may be of different dimensions. A wall sleeve size of 42” x 16” is the most typical and by far the most widespread. You must take a critical look not only at the equipment, but at the support network and solutions-based philosophy of the companies you review. Even replacing PTACs with newer-model PTACs can present challenges. The PTAC itself may have different requirements, as is the case with refrigerants. The changes in federal regulations have affected the equipment’s refrigerants. They have traditionally used R22, but as a result of a treaty signed in 1987, R22 could no longer be manufactured after December 31, 2009. R410A replaced R22 and is a non-ozone depleting refrigerant.

While hotel owners can continue to get the R22 serviced, is that the best strategy if you are going to replacement? Manufacturers have, therefore, made their units more efficient in order to accommodate R410A. Indeed, instead of investing in a redesign, some conglomerate companies sold their PTAC divisions. Where does that leave the hotel engineer? Here is a quick checklist to follow in conducting your vendor review when you embark on a PTAC replacement renovation.

PTACs Inside Out

Reliable performance – ask the vendor to give you a sense of product life. PTACs should last 15 to 20 years as a rule.

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Low cost, easy installation – simplicity is the key because it saves money! Ask to review the installation instructions, and especially if the vendor will work with you on problematic installations!

Quiet comfort – review the sound levels. One of the main complaints engineers hear about PTACs is its noise. Is there a possibility of using a vertical PTAC? Explore these possibilities with your vendor. Compact, aesthetic design – top PTACs use superior sheet metal cabinetry with standard anodized aluminum grilles.

Customization options – this is critical, because hotels are so different. Can your vendor accommodate a variety of depth wall sleeves, custom louver colors and custom cabinetry?

Wireless, wall-mounted controls - they work via an RF or IR system between a wall-mount controller and

the PTAC, allowing retrofits and upgrades without rewiring and the necessary renovation required. PTACs have been around for a long time – and will continue to be. It is important for today’s hotel engineer to understand them in order to provide adequate guest comfort that is essential to the success of a hotel.

Why PTACs Solve Problems of Comfort

PTACs are more cost effective than maintaining large, central systems, which also need a licensed HVAC professional on call continually. In addition, the central system requires all rooms to be constantly heating and cooling, which is not necessary because of room-usage patterns. Large systems are simply not very efficient for hotel rooms.

As a “thru-the-wall” solution, PTACs can meet all the needs of the hotel and can be installed with all the necessary components to update and improve the efficiency and performance of the previous equipment. New chassis can be installed to successfully enhance the comfort level of each guest room. This is a huge benefit in terms of maintenance.

For example, compared to 4-pipe systems, PTACs limit financial damage to the single room where the unit may be malfunctioning. One major benefit of PTACs for hotel owners is ease of replacement: They are generally pulled out of their sleeve and replaced with a new unit.

Heating coils can be added to an existing system and Digital Remote Thermostats are often mounted on the walls to enhance the features and aesthetics of each unit. Renovations and upgrades can also include wall sleeves, heat assemblies and chassis, retrofitted into previously un-renovated spaces.

PTACs are often perfectly compatible to a building’s available power. Check with your local authorities. Also consider heat pumps as a way of providing seasonal heating efficiency. Aesthetically, PTAC units provide quiet comfort and can be made to match well with the room décor. They are the ideal choice to enhance hotel guestrooms, including high-end luxury accommodations.

Article By: Mo Siegel, President/Co-CEO, Ice

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of energy.

Set your furnace thermostat to around 65 degrees and, if you are sedentary, wear socks and a woolen head cap. If active, you can go down even lower and not notice any discomfort.

Using the shortest wash cycle, wash full loads in your dishwasher. Load it up just as compactly as you can. There is no reason to keep lights on in rooms you are not using unless you are concerned for safety and security. Over 50% of our electricity is generated by burning coal, so you're just sending CO2 into the atmosphere and wasting your money. Wrap your water heater with a fiberfill "blanket" to insulate it from cold temperatures. Turn it down to the warm or lower settings when you are gone on vacation. Consider investing in on demand, tankless (or small tank) water systems.

Replace (or in some cases wash) your furnace filter regularly. These clog quickly and will make your furnace work that much harder to get outside air. Replacement filters cost only \$1 to \$2. Get Reflectix insulation. It is bubble pack with aluminum foil on both sides. A \$10 roll is about 8' long by 2.5' wide. Works especially well as a reflector or insulator of heat on windows. Contact your local utility for special programs to save you money on energy based on income/need. Get a free energy audit!

If you have a crawl space underneath your house which has multiple vents to the outside, close off most vents to create a dead (and warmer) air space under rooms you are trying to keep warm. In our newer house door thresholds were not installed properly, allowing 1/4" or larger gaps for mice to intrude – and loss of cold air to escape. Get down on your hands and knees and find ways to seal these gaps with metal or rubber strips.

**Article By: Bill Seavey, PowerFromSun.com,
billseavey@gmail.com**



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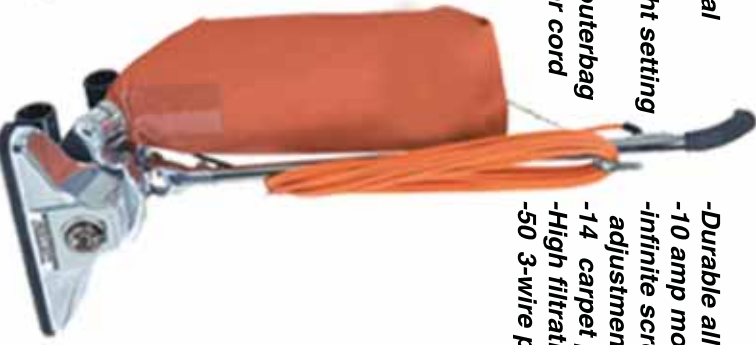
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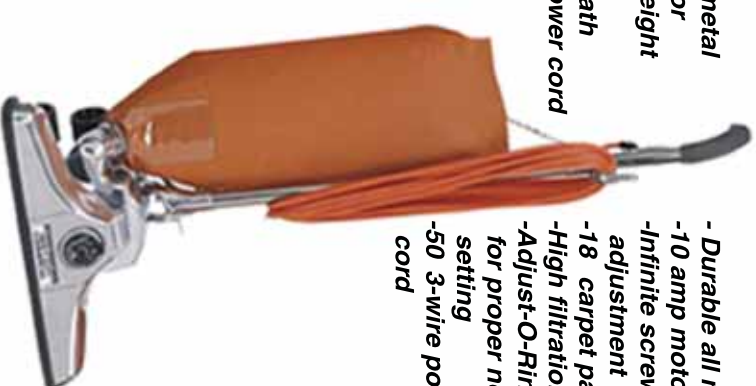
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- 50 3-wire power cord



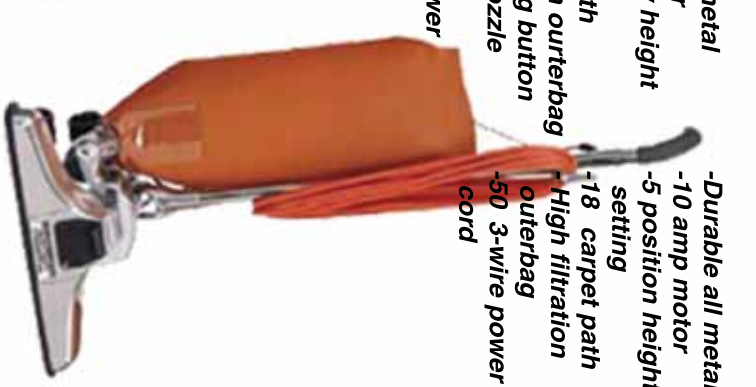
- Durable all metal
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- 5 position height adjustment
- 14 carpet path
- 50 3-wire power cord



- Durable all metal
- 10 amp motor
- infinite screw height adjustment
- 18 carpet path
- High filtration outerbag
- Adjust-O-Ring button for proper nozzle setting
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- Durable all metal
- 10 amp motor
- 5 position height setting
- 18 carpet path
- High filtration outerbag
- 50 3-wire power cord



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Turismo Y Mas
Ideas para el Turismo de Verano
By: Dr. Peter Tarlow, Tourism Tidbits

Muchos locales turísticos ven a los meses de verano como la temporada alta. Los precios se elevan, en ocasiones el servicio es menor, y muchas de las atracciones turísticas, hoteles, restaurantes o sistemas de transporte saben que los recibos de verano determinarán el éxito o el fracaso del año entero. Además, muchos locales toman la posición de que una vez pasado el verano, el mercadeo puede ser una pérdida de tiempo, ya que los planes de las vacaciones de verano ya se hicieron. Ciertamente algunas áreas en el mundo dependen grandemente de los ajetreos del tráfico de verano. Por ejemplo, muchas comunidades en la playa (especialmente aquellas localizadas en climas fríos) pueden recibir más del 90% de sus ganancias netas de las ventas de verano. Aun las locaciones turísticas sin playa ven el verano como un tiempo de gran oportunidad. Por ejemplo, las áreas urbanas pueden ver el verano como un tiempo cuando los residentes locales huyen a climas más agradables, pero también se pueden beneficiar de los visitantes que buscan una experiencia cultural (especialmente aquellos con niños) en un tiempo cuando la vida de la gran ciudad es un poco más confiable. Este verano también puede ser retador para muchas localidades. La economía aun esta tambaleante en muchos lugares del mundo, y algunas personas pospondrán sus vacaciones de verano o simplemente no viajarán este año. Para ayudarle a prepararse para el verano y convertir el año en una gran temporada aquí hay algunas ideas.

- **Todo al alcance.** No importa donde está usted se encuentre que la gente estará buscando ofertas este verano. Elabore libros de cupones de verano para lugares donde se puede gastar un poco menos. Sea cuidadoso de no ir al extremo de poner los precios tan bajos que las agencias de turismo locales no puedan mantenerse a flote. El truco es dar valor mezclado con buen servicio. De hecho en un servicio de economía a la baja se convierte en un aspecto muy importante. Nuestros invitados, muchos de los cuales están batalando con costear unas vacaciones, no desean sentir que son menos que invitados honorarios. **Enseña a sonreír a los empleados de la línea del frente.** El buen servicio se relaciona con un sentido de

—Continued on Page 20»»»

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munity has poor customer service or simply is not tourism friendly, then conventioners will speak poorly of you rather than of the convention itself. The more delegates enjoy your community the more likely they are to return as leisure visitors or recommend it to their family and friends.

-Encourage members of the local community to give away free-bees to all conventioners. Especially in a challenging economy free-bees are a good source of advertising and permit local business owners to interface with new and potential customers. Often out-of-towners will provide the sort of feedback that locals never give. Encourage convention exhibitors to use simple yet eye catching colors and designs to attract people to their booth and if the show requires personal discussions then make sure that the booth has sufficient personnel in it at all times. The basic rules of customer service are even more necessary when your community is hosting a convention. Thus make your convention center cost effective. For example meeting planners will remember the fact that you provided free table set-ups and the conventioners will

be pleased if you provide free computer access. **Provide activities, restaurants and attraction lists for before, during and after a convention** Conventions are your community's chance to show off. Remember that everyone at the trade show may be a visitor and is a potential source for future revenue.
Article By: Dr. Peter Tarlow

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Sea creativo en ofrecer no solo vacaciones de verano libres de estrés sino también vacaciones desestresantes. La situación económica actual ha puesto una gran cantidad de estrés en mucha gente. Piense bien como puede facilitar el registro y la salida de los hoteles, ayude a la gente a encontrar locaciones en la comunidad, y a no perderse. Una de las razones por las que la gente a menudo esta estresada después de unas vacaciones es que los viajes ya no son divertidos; ya sea en un auto, avión, barco o vagón de tren. Desarrolle maneras para hacer que sus terminales de transporte se

««Continued from Page 18— Tourism Tidbits

cuidado y con una actitud amigable y abierta. Este es el año para recordar a toda la gente de la línea del frente que ningún trabajo esta garantizado. Tenemos que ganarnos nuestro trabajo con cada huésped. Muy a menudo la experiencia turística ha sido todo menos alegre. No hay mejor publicidad y campaña de mercadeo que una sonrisa amigable.

No tema a los visitantes de otro país. Siga los tipos de cambio, por ejemplo, si el euro esta caro contra el dólar los Europeos tienden a volar a los Estados Unidos. Y, sin embargo hay un aumento en el valor del dólar, los Americanos pueden volver a Europa. Recuerde que los viajeros extranjeros tienden a gastar mas dinero en una localidad que la población local. El truco es hacer que su viaje sea lo mas fácil posible. Ofrezca locales fáciles donde pueden cambiar dinero, imprima mapas con idiomas múltiples y guías y anime a los restaurantes a tener menús en mas de un idioma.

No tema promover un fin de semana largo. No todos pueden costear tanto en tiempo como en dinero unas vacaciones de dos semanas. Estas personas pueden estar buscando escapadas de fin de semana que empiezan en viernes y terminan el lunes en la noche. La otra alternativa es tener que crear un especial de media semana. Puede preferir vender sus habitaciones al 50% de la tarifa normal que no tener ninguna entrada del todo. Si la economía esta tambaleante, entonces enfóquese en atraer a la gente de los estados a l e d a ñ o s .

sientan mas “caseras” y menos estresantes. No olvide observar los precios de la gasolina. Mientras que los precios de la gasolina tradicionalmente suben durante los meses de verano, observe las tendencias y si se vuelven muy caras use este gasto como una herramienta creativa de mercadeo.

Mercadee aun en los meses de verano. No todos tienen planes para el verano, y siempre hay aquellas personas que están buscando una escapada de ultimo minuto. Recuerde que el mercadeo creativo este verano puede proveerle con una lista potencial de clientes nuevos para el próximo verano. Recuerde que el buen servicio es la mejor forma de mercadeo. Busque el tiempo cuando los precios de los medios están mas bajos y entonces vaya a mercados selectos que se pueden convertir en zonas de mercadeo para nichos nuevos.

Cree una campaña de mercadeo de verano en la red. La red es un gran medio especialmente para los viajeros de ultimo minuto. Considere cosas tales como:

- Itinerarios de verano especiales
- Especiales en la red para veranos especiales.
- Divida sus atracciones por estilo, locución y precio.
- Establezca direcciones desde cualquier lugar hacia cualquier lugar en su local.
- Haga listas de las atracciones cercanas, desde los hoteles a los restaurantes hasta las habitaciones de recreo.

Article By: Dr. Peter Tarlow

The Budget

By: Joseph A. Gaccione, CEOE, CHE

The Engineering Department budget is made up of several major items or areas:

Labor hours and labor dollars line; Employee benefits line & payroll taxes.

Repair & Maintenance

Other expenses include all operating supplies and a breakdown of how many dollars in each category. It will have lines for outside services and fees and for maintenance contracts.

It will include a section for your energy, forecasted dollars and actual dollars spent.

It will include lines for electricity, fuel (gas & oil) and water.

It will have lines for expense and capital dollars for Rehab and Projects.

Note: Your total budget for repair and maintenance should be around 10% of your property's revenue and 50% of it is for energy. Therefore, your repair and maintenance should run around 4.6% to 5.6% of revenue. This does not include capital and expense dollars.

Ways To Control The Budget

Divide your budget by the quarter or months. Track each line item every month to keep track of how much you have spent in each category, and how much is left for the quarter or year.

Take time to make all your department personnel aware of the budget: How much was spent, and where and why it was spent.

Let them suggest ways to control and hold down spending.

Keep your in-house spare parts inventory to a minimum. There are too many dollars lying on the shelves of the engineering stock rooms. Only buy what you are going to use.

Set up a master supplier that will maintain your stock for you and deliver when needed. You normally can get an overall price break this way.

Make all the other departments aware of the maintenance cost for their areas and seek their help in holding down your expenditures.

Try dividing your budget for your maintenance personnel and let them control it, (i.e.) give the electricians their budget for the year, and make them

responsible for it. Spend and control your company's dollars as if they were your own, and come in at the end of the year on or below budget. **Every dollar not spent or saved goes right to the bottom line.**

Questions:

Are you on budget for the quarter?

Were you over or under budget last year?

Does your staff understand the budget?

Is your staff responsible for controlling portions of the budget?

What ways are you using to control your budget?

Do you know how much you have spent so far this year on light bulbs, paint etc.?

Is your labor budget in line with your approved labor hours?

Have you recorded any variances to your budget?

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AUTHOR: JOSEPH A. GACCIONE CEOE, CHE.

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FIRST QUARTER

January

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Materials _____

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Energy

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Power _____

Gas _____

Water & Sewer _____

Solid Waste _____

Difference _____

Things To Remember

If you want to be able to secure funding for failing equipment or additional manpower, you need to learn and understand the language of the business. Think about it, everything boils down to dollars. So when you are talking to your general manager, you just can't say: "The boiler is going to fail and we won't have any hot water!" You need to do your homework, by presenting the following to the general manager:
The cost for the boiler replacement including labor.

You must first go to Finance for the information on the following: How long will it take to pay off the boiler? If there is a return on this investment, what is it? What will be the loss of revenue if the boiler is not replaced?

Will it be charged to Capital or Expense?

Another way to say this is: **"Do it by the numbers"**. That is all they understand. The same thing applies for your request for manpower.

Get with your controller or accountant and tell them you want to learn all you can about the financial side of the business. Have them explain your budget to you. Take accounting and hotel finance courses.

Remember, you are managing a business and it is all about **money**.

Questions:

Do you understand your budget?

Do you maintain a monthly budget spread sheet?

Are you over or under this month?

Do you talk their language?

Have you taken any finance courses?

Remarks:

IS YOUR ENERGY BILL GROWING?

The Utility Bill

If you're utility bill increases by 5% each year and nothing is done to hold the line; what do you think your costs will be five years, ten years or fifteen years from now? You can only raise the room rate so high to compensate for it. The 'end result' will be that they will close the doors and shutdown or sell. The cost of electricity averages around 70% of your utility costs. The rest goes to fuel, gas, water and sewer. There is a separate line for solid waste removal in your budget.

When the 1973 energy oil shortage hit, it took us all by surprise and the days of inexpensive energy were over. In the hospitality business, before the energy crisis, the comptroller just paid the bills, no questions asked or needed, but that all soon changed. They did not know how to handle and control the utilities, so they handed off the management of the utility bills to engineering.

Well now that you have that hot potato, what are you doing with it? Are you fighting the never-ending battle of rising fuel and energy costs?

Well let's first put all of this in perspective. The engineering department is nothing more than a mini-utility plant. It is charged with delivering and distributing the required power and water throughout

the property by maintaining and operating all the equipment at maximum efficiency, at all times. The only power and water that engineering uses is to manufacture and operate the heating, cooling and ventilation systems, plus producing and delivering potable hot water, cold water and steam. The operating units are the end users of this energy, not the engineering department.

To start with, all departments must be made aware of the utility costs, look for ways to save it and still provide guest service and comfort-conserving energy is every departments responsibility, not just the engineering department.

UTILITY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

1. Establish program goals
2. Summarize utility consumption information
3. Perform a utility survey
4. Determine utility management opportunities
5. Revise operating procedures
6. Train employees in utility control techniques and awareness for them.
7. Provide all departments copies of the property utility bills and utility budget and its' effect on the bottom line.
8. Set-up competition between operating departments by putting in place reward and incentive programs, and etc.
9. Total commitment by all levels of the management team to this on-going program.
10. Provide awareness training to all members of the management team, to include:
 - a. The need for the control and reduction of utility costs.
 - b. Benefits to them and their teams.
 - c. Benefits to the organization

BENEFITS

1. 5% to 15% reduction of utility costs without investing any operating or capital funds.
2. Increased guest comfort and satisfaction.
3. More accurate budget forecasting.
4. Will promote total property team building.
5. Improved equipment performance by extending life of equipment and reduction of repair maintenance costs.
6. Will provide education and understanding for the need to control and manage the property's financial resources in a positive manner.

Tips For Controlling Your Energy Budget

You can save 15% to 20% just by changing the way you operate the facility.

Operate your potable hot water to guestrooms at no more then 125 degrees.

If one boiler is enough to satisfy the demand for hot water, keep the other on stand by.

Make sure that all pipe insulation is in good condition.

Check all T- STAT settings all areas.

A Few More Energy Wasters

Lights left on all night - both inside and out.

Fountains are operating 24-7.

Refrigerator and freezer doors left open.

All ranges are fired up and operating, but not being used.

Housekeeping leaving lights on when the guestrooms are unoccupied.

Not 'setting back' the thermostat after cleaning the room.

All terminals left on behind the front desk, all night long.

Lights left on in offices and equipment rooms.

The list goes on. Walk your property; question everything. Ask: "Why are we doing it this way?" and "Why is it running and why are they left on?"

Water Wasters

How many leaking and dripping lavatory sets and house bibs have you looked at? One drop is not much, but put them all together and you have a small flood.

Now the cost of potable water is relatively inexpensive, but the cost of sewer service is around 50% more than the cost of the water.

Does your dipper well water run 24-7?

Does the kitchen staff thaw out meat and other products under water?

How often do you check the flappers in your water closets?

How many times does the housekeeper flush the toilet when cleaning the room? **If you can save one flush per room per day, you have saved lots water and sewer costs.**

HVAC and Refrigeration

In what condition is your insulation around your hot and chilled water pipes?

Are all your filters changed on a regular schedule for the guestrooms, HVAC units, refrigeration and ice machines?

If you have a Central HVAC System:

At least once a year, check your control valves for leak-through when closed. This also applies to your fan coil units.

Use time-released pads to keep your pans flowing free and last between filter changes, this will keep your pans algae free. **Note: they go by many names, such as zip strips, pan safe, etc.**

When replacing HVAC units order them with stainless steel pans, coil and supports. The fan and its housing along with all other parts in the wet area should be epoxy coated. They will not only operate much better but they will last years longer. No down time to pan leakage, fan and coil support problems. If you have two chillers, run only one. Bring on the other one only when needed, and never start up on full load, if you want to control your power bill.

Note: The most important thing you can do is keep your coils clean and the filters changed.

Then your systems will operate for a long time and be trouble free. Use a non-acid coil cleaner when cleaning your coils.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT DOING ANY OF THE FOLLOWING THINGS TO SAVE DOLLARS ON YOUR OPERATING BUDGET!

Upgrade your lighting by switching to compact fluorescent Lights. You will save on power costs, and you will need less A/C because you have eliminated the heat that was being given off from the incandescent light bulbs.

Save big dollars in your laundry by installing an ozone water treatment system, it uses very little hot water and your chemicals' cost go way down.

You can ozone in your cooling tower. No chemicals are needed.

If you have not added meters for your irrigation, pool and cooling tower, you need to which saves on your sewer costs.

You can install a guestroom Thermostat Setback System.

Remember to read your meters everyday; so you can plot the trends and keep check on the utility company.

Install window film on your windows and sliding glass doors, it will cut down on your cooling and heating costs, and blocks out almost 90% of the UV. It also provides you with shatter protection in the event of glass breakage.

When you need to replace your Heat Exchanger's tubs and or Coils, you should replace the Copper

Nickel with Stainless Steel and you will get years of life from the Stainless Steel vs. three or so years from the Copper Nickel. The cost difference more than pays for itself in the long run.

When you install Teflon on the side skirts of your escalators and moving sidewalks, you will decrease the coefficient of friction and not get tennis type shoes caught in the side skirts. The rubber sides of the shoe get hot when it is sliding along the stainless steel side skirts of the escalator and is rolled in, sometimes causing injury to the foot.

When you are setting up a budget, if other expenses or materials are approximately 50% of your total labor dollars the budget is correct.

Questions:

Do you have an energy management team in place at your property?

Are all departments involved in trying to save energy? Are all the departments aware of how much your property is spending on energy?

3. Do you instruct your housekeepers to turn back the guestroom thermostat to 78 f, when they are finished cleaning the room? Do you tell them it is ok to turn the thermostat down to cool the room when they are cleaning?

4. How much did you save last year on your energy budget?

Do you have an energy plan in place for this year?

How many dollars are you going to try to shave off of your energy bill this year, and how are you planning to do it?

Do you have plans in place to upgrade some of your systems?

Are you looking at other ways to save on your operating budget?

Are you going to come in at the end of the year, on or under your operating budget?

Have you tracked and recorded any and all variances to your operating budget?

UN-BUDGETED NEW WORK

All through the year, you will receive requests for **UN-BUDGETED PROJECTS**, which will cause you to go over-budget on materials and fall behind on your budgeted routine work.

In order to protect your budget and reconcile any variances of your operating budget at the end of the year, you should develop a **“New Project Authorized Work Form Request.”**

It should describe the work, include an estimate for

labor and materials dollars, and have it signed by the Requester and signed off by the General Manager. Then include it in your budget as 'Authorized Variance'.

This also applies to capital equipment, which was purchased by other departments, but who did not include funding for the installation in the budget.

Sample Form

NEW PROJECT AUTHORIZATION WORK REQUEST

Date _____
Work Requested _____
Requested By _____
Project Estimate _____
Labor Hours _____
Total Labor Dollars \$ _____
Material Dollars \$ _____
Grand Total \$ _____
Authorized Signatures:
Department Manager _____
General Manager _____
Remarks _____

FOOD AND BEVERAGE DEPARTMENT

The food and beverage department is right at the top of the list when it comes to maintenance costs. They are not made aware of the labor and material dollars spent to maintain the kitchens, bars and snack bars. It has been my belief over the years that if the cost of maintaining the food and beverage areas was subtracted from their profit line, you would see a dramatic change in the way they operate. Their main concerns are with food costs and production, and not with how they operate and clean the equipment. Instead of taking the used oil and grease out to the grease drums, it goes down the floor drains. The next thing you know, they have a backup of the drain system. Maintenance then has to stop what they are doing to clear the drains. At night when the kitchen and bars are cleaned, the floor drains' covers are removed and any trash is pushed down the drains. Consequently, it starts all over again! While they are cleaning the kitchen, they hose down the equipment. If it is hot (which it is most of the time), it warps the oven side plates, sometimes cracking and warping the flat top ranges but the grease comes off faster. If they use steam to clean the floors, it blows out the grout; and water gets under the floor tile and now you have a floor repair job on your

hands. In the morning when they fire up the kitchen, the controls do not function because they were hosed down during the cleaning and maintenance is called again to repair the problem.

I have wondered for a long time, if food and beverage were a "stand-alone" unit (outside and down the street), and had to pay each time the service technician came out to correct the problem; just how long it would take for the management staff to take corrective action.

Did you ever ask yourself or the chief, why they fire up **all** the ranges full hot every morning when they are only using one or two pieces of equipment? Also, did you know that over 90% of all food is cooked at 375 deg., but the equipment is set up 400 or 500 deg. or just standing by at these temperatures? This sure does not help your utility bill and it also shortens the equipment life.

Walk-in boxes are left with the doors open and boxes are piled high, blocking the airflow. Then maintenance is called because the box temperature is too high! Sound familiar to you? The self-closures are blocked open or broke. The curtains meant to keep the cold air in; are instead piled up, out of the way, on top of food boxes, so they don't fall across the doorway.

Door handles are broken or bent from carts, as well as door gaskets being cut and unable to provide a good seal. This not only is wasting energy but the products are not being stored at the proper temperature.

They run floor mats and other large items through the dish machine. This breaks the fingers on the conveyor belt, damages the drive clutch and bends the final rinse arm out of shape.

So how do you respond to all of this misuse and equipment abuse? Well to tell you the truth, there is not much you can do until the culinary staff changes the way they operate, and start to understand the cost associated with their actions. The best thing that you can do is to revisit your kitchen equipment P.M. Program and scale it back. Then do more pre - operation checks, instead of the normal type PM. Keep good equipment history records, including the cost of labor and parts. Communicate to the food and beverage manager and the chief about the maintenance charges, including energy used for the quarter and try to work with them. Be proactive, not reactive and try to set up a win-win for the property.

Questions:

Do you keep equipment history records and all food and beverage equipment?

Do you communicate well with the culinary staff?

Do you know how much you have spent in the food and beverage areas this year?

Do you make them aware of your energy costs and ways they can help save?

Have you tack-welded down your floor drain covers to prevent easy removal?

RECYCLING

You can save on solid waste if you recycle glass, metal, aluminum and receive funds back from the recycler.

Installing a cardboard bailing compactor will not only save room in your trash compactor, it will result in fewer pulls and you can sell the cardboard! And you will be helping the environment, by not adding to the landfills.

EMPLOYEES ON LIGHT DUTY CAN WORK IN RECYCLING, instead of staying out on workers compensation.

Questions:

Have you tried recycling?

Have you purchased any recycled products?

Is your property green friendly?

Article By: Joseph A. Gaccione, CEOE, CHE

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