

# HOSPITALITY TECHNOLOGY AWARDS

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The Hospitality Technology Awards, the only awards rewarding technology in the hospitality industry, were specifically designed to reward the most effective use of technology within independent outlets and group operations across hotels, restaurants, pubs and leisure chains.

Now into its second successful year, the event attracted floods of entries. The categories were Best Use of Technology in a Front of House Environment, Back Office Environment and Best Use of Customer Information. The final award was open to suppliers of technology to the hospitality industry, rewarding 'Innovation of the Year'.

The judges included representatives and consultants from HITA, KPMG, ITIM and Partners in Marketing, who gathered in September to discuss and debate the final shortlist. The judges were looking for the business within each category that had made a significant impact on the operation and profitability of their business with their use of technology. After many hours of deliberation, the judges finally determined the winners of the **Hospitality Technology Awards 2000**.

The Awards evening, held on Monday 2 October at the Copthorne Tara Hotel in Kensington, London, saw TV presenter Jonathan Gould present the awards.

### THE JUDGES

**Nick Pattle** consultant, KPMG

**Fraser Winterbottom** director hospitality & leisure solutions, ITIM Consulting

**Alyson Dombey** partner, Partners in Marketing

**Andy Frew** chairman, HITA

**Louise Stevens** publisher, HOTEL & RESTAURANT

**Lorraine Wood** head of events – hospitality division, Quantum Business Media

**Nigel Jagers** head of online, Quantum Business Media

### BEST USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN A FRONT OFFICE ENVIRONMENT – INDEPENDENT OUTLET

**Winner: Battlesteads Hotel,**



Robert Rowland from Battlesteads Hotel with Sarah Traynor, publishing director, HOTEL & RESTAURANT

Owners Robert & Mieke Rowland have worked hard to integrate front and back offices, where so many hotels drop important data out of site – with the PMS and financial control systems updating each other in real time, and in great detail. Their Visitor's Book is on the website, and recent guests are more willing to post honest comments than under the beady eye of a receptionist!

### BEST USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN A FRONT OF HOUSE ENVIRONMENT – MULTIPLE CHAIN

**Winner: Forte Hotels**



David Lumdsdon from Forte Hotels receiving his award from Sarah Traynor, publishing director, HOTEL & RESTAURANT

The web-based management of function rooms and bookings is the first major application to use a thin client networking principle. David Lumdsdon, UK IT manager at Forte Hotels, worked closely with BT to introduce this new Internet-based architecture on the scale needed for Forte Hotels. The system went live in December 1999 with the first 20 hotels; the remaining 60 have since been added. The centralising of conference and banqueting information into one database gives business information for the group as a whole to whoever needs it.

### BEST USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN A BACK OFFICE ENVIRONMENT

**Winner: Groupe Chez Gérard**



Jason Danciger, Mark Sharma-Drake and Karen Ottey from Groupe Chez Gérard with Sue Welch from HITA

This entry demonstrated a thoroughly thought-through IT application by switching to a thin client network. The network of Kilostream leased lines between outlets, connected with Remanco point-of-sale systems at the restaurants, offers management information, including: accounts, staff management, wages etc. It now only costs a few hundred pounds to bring a new restaurant into the Group's IT environment. It's simply added to the group's "inventory", and all the company's applications, fully up to date, are immediately available.

### BEST USE OF CUSTOMER INFORMATION – INDEPENDENT OUTLET

**Winner: Gleneagles Hotel**



Deborah Lott from Gleneagles Hotel with Lorraine Wood, head of events, Quantum Business Media

An ambitious use of the web for a single establishment. When bookings are made, the website sends an automatic e-mail to that effect. Data from the Access database on the website is downloaded weekly from the ISP. Following this, comparisons between the web database and on-site database are made to ensure that incoming information from clients does not duplicate or contract what is already held locally.

### BEST USE OF CUSTOMER INFORMATION – MULTIPLE CHAIN

**Winner: Home Corporation**

This ambitious website, now managed by Black ID on behalf of Home Corporation, uses a multi-megabit leased line to successfully link its London and Sydney establishments for web-information and live TV streaming from the London club to website visitors in Sydney or elsewhere. A TV camera in the club transmits through the DJ's AV computer system and out via the leased line to Black ID's server, and then to the website.

### INNOVATION OF THE YEAR

**Winner: QuadraNet**



Stephen Madden and David Eades from QuadraNet with Louise Stevens, publisher, HOTEL & RESTAURANT

The QuadraNet software shows its restaurateur pedigree by being particularly versatile in taking reservations. Staff are guided by the system on ideas from re-arranging tables to estimated departure times, based on previous diners. It can even apply those parameters to another restaurant in the group for customers if the primary one is already full. Help icons and auto-prompts ensure that the person handling the telephone enquiry never misses a trick to find the diners something highly acceptable to them.

Quadranet has set new standards in restaurant management, disengaging it from its EPOS roots – and the company's approach will strongly influence the future development of restaurant management IT.