

HOSPACE

Conference & Exhibition



NEWS

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Challenges of hotel guest expectation about new technologies to be put under the microscope at IT debate at HOSPACE 2011 – the new name for the 6th Annual BAHA Hospitality Finance Conference and IT Exhibition

'New Approaches to a Bright Future?' is the title of the one-day HOSPACE 2011 – to be held on Thursday, 24 November 2011 at the Sofitel Hotel, London Heathrow at Terminal 5.

The major challenges presented by hotel guest expectation regarding new technologies will be put under the microscope at a top level IT debate, to be staged at HOSPACE 2011 – the new name for the 6th Annual BAHA Hospitality Finance and IT Exhibition, to be held on Thursday, 24 November at the Sofitel Hotel, London Heathrow at Terminal 5.

At the Conference, entitled 'New Approaches to a Bright Future', a panel of leading hospitality industry IT experts – including Jeremy Ward, Senior Vice President IT at Kempinski Hotels; Thierry Guiraudios, Vice President IT, Louvre Hotels; and Mark Read, Group IT Manager, Firmdale Hotels – will be debating the nature of new technologies expected by today's hotels guests, together with an examination of the investment and upgrades required to meet current demand. Overseeing proceedings will be HOSPA IT Community Chair Bryan Steele, who is Managing Director of Jireh-Tek.

“We are delighted to have such an eminent panel of Hospitality industry IT leaders, under the skilful and expert chairmanship of Bryan Steele, to debate this vitally important subject,” said HOSPA Chief Executive Carl Weldon. “Today’s hotel guests are expecting at least as much – if not more – in their rooms than they do in their own homes, as consumer electronic technology develops and becomes more and more accessible. Hotels have to anticipate guest demand in this respect and manage it across large numbers of rooms and spaces. The panel will discuss what can be done and what the technologies may be, as well as highlight some of the latest developments and key issues – such as the need for cost effective bandwidth – which are now so crucial to hotel guest offerings and branding.”

The IT debate will also focus on the nature of the role of IT professionals, who have to manage various convergences of the ‘Web’ of varying and different technologies, as well as their deployment throughout their businesses.

“The question is,” said the HOSPA Chief Executive, “are current hospitality IT professionals just like a spider at the centre of its web? Do they hold together the knitting of various aspects of systems throughout the business – from guest technologies, to ‘in-house’ and ‘in-company’ systems and networks, all converging and connecting in various ways? Some systems are physically based in the property; others are delivered from above the property – either centrally or as ‘Software-as-a-Service’. A key issue is that the systems are no longer unique hospitality systems, but really require the adoption of main-stream technologies used across all industries.”

The HOSPACE IT panel will debate the fact that today’s hospitality IT manager needs modern skills and expertise to manage these disparate aspects – especially, as some of these areas are now ‘front-line’.

As in past years, the Annual Conference will be supported by a growing and increasingly influential exhibition of IT suppliers – providing delegates with a ‘one stop shop’ to view and interact with the latest and ‘best in class’ technologies – covering all eventualities for hospitality businesses, whether they be start-up, established independent, or multi chain-owned, operations.

This year for HOSPACE 2011 delegates, there is a major hospitality technology bonus. HOSPA's strategic partner – Texas-based Hospitality Financial and Technology Professionals (HFTP) – is partnering its popular European Hospitality Technology Educational Conference (EHTEC) with HOSPA's HOSPACE 2011. An extra day has been added to the one-day HOSPACE 2011 to accommodate 'EHTEC@HOSPACE 2011', which will be held on Friday, 25 November, also at the Sofitel Hotel, London Heathrow at Terminal 5. The subjects to be covered range from: 'How does technology generate revenue, or does it in fact do so?' and 'Data Security/PCI', to a presentation on 'Cloud' computing; and a problem solving 'Ask the Experts' session. EHTEC@HOSPACE is being offered as a complimentary extra only for delegates attending HOSPACE 2011. For further information about EHTEC@HOSPACE email: education@hftp.org; or visit: www.hftp.org

HOSPACE 2011 is the conference of HOSPA – the 'Hospitality Professionals Association' for Hospitality Finance, Revenue Management and IT (formerly known as BAHA). This highly prestigious event will enable UK and international delegates to get an informed and cutting-edge view from an international line-up of inspirational experts – all icons in their own field – about the latest key financial, revenue and IT management issues and developments; as well as the commercial aspects that connect these together to maximise profitability. Highlights include: 'An industry and London Olympics Overview'; a 'Leaders Panel' discussion on key trends and challenges facing the hospitality industry; a Revenue Management session asking the question: 'Is offering a best available rate putting your business legally at risk?'; and a programme of industry specific educational workshops – all led by top specialists in their subjects.

HOSPACE 2011 (formerly known as the BAHA Conference and IT Exhibition) promises to be invaluable for networking, professional updating – through expert presentations, panel forums and educational workshops – and experiencing Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

The event's grand finale Gala Dinner – including the signature 'Pub Quiz' – is one of the traditional social networking highlights of the BAHA Conference.

For regularly updated information on HOSPACE 2011 (BAHA Conference and IT Exhibition), visit the HOSPACE 2011 Website temporarily at: www.bahaconference.co.uk . For bookings and further details for both HOSPACE 2011 and EHTEC, contact the HOSPA Administration Office on telephone: 01202 889 430; fax: 01202 887 967; or email: bookings@hospace.net

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Notes to Editors

1. About HOSPA ('Hospitality Professionals Association' for Finance, Revenue Management and IT) – BAHA moving forward

HOSPA is a non-profit educational organisation which has evolved from BAHA (British Association of Hospitality Accountants) which was formed in 1969. The aim of HOSPA is to bring together those hospitality industry professionals involved in Financial Management, Revenue Management and IT. Whereas BAHA has been recognised as the UK's authoritative voice in the hospitality industry on financial management, technical accounting issues, taxation, and hotel valuation, HOSPA now is additionally the leading arena for debate on hotel systems and Revenue Management topics through their annual Conference and meetings programmes. The membership has expanded to over 1,000 members. HOSPA, which provides industry specific hospitality focused qualifications in Financial Management and IT, is currently developing a similar qualification for Revenue Management. For more information, visit: www.baha-uk.org; and from 3 October 2011: www.hospa.org

2. Background to decision to change from BAHA to HOSPA and HOSPACE 2011

Following a specially convened BAHA Extraordinary General Meeting in May 2011, BAHA members overwhelmingly voted and approved the name change to 'HOSPA' – the Hospitality Professionals Association. The new name is accompanied by a flexible strap-line that defines the membership – comprising the three HOSPA Communities for Finance, Revenue Management and IT professionals. On 19 September 2011, HOSPA was formally launched in London, as was the new name for its highly acclaimed Annual Conference and IT Exhibition which is now known as 'HOSPACE' (HOSPA plus CE for Conference and Exhibition). 'HOSPACE 2011' is to be held on 24 November at the Sofitel Hotel, London Heathrow at Terminal 5.

HOSPA Chairman Paul Dukes explained why the then BAHA Council took the decision to give the Association a new identity. "Finance in the UK hospitality industry has changed markedly since BAHA was formed over 40 years ago," he said. "It is not only the sector that has changed, but also the way it functions – from the emergence of IT in hotel management, guest services, administration, and guest-room technology, to raising finance and the new approach to maximising room revenues – to name but a few examples. BAHA has developed accordingly – continually seeking to provide cutting-edge knowledge; and greater opportunities for personal development, education, meetings, debates and special events for its membership, helping them to enhance skills, networking and employment potential. In 2009, recognising the increasing inter-dependence of finance, revenue management and IT professionals, the then BAHA Council and members took the decision to enable revenue management and IT professionals to become full members of BAHA. Already this has had a positive impact on our membership, as highlighted at the highly successful 2010 BAHA Annual Conference and IT Exhibition which attracted a record attendance. Now, the Association would like to encourage much wider membership and professional opportunities for all; and the BAHA Council believes that the change in the Association's name to 'HOSPA' – together with a new distinctive logo and flexible strap-line – will more accurately reflect our rapidly growing membership and their professionalism within the hospitality industry."