

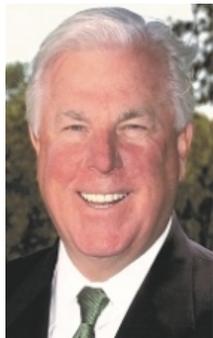
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Mr. Harvey

Insurance

Managing Special Events Without Spoiling the Fun

By Philip J Harvey, President, Venture Insurance Programs

A city's win of a major special event like the Republican or Democratic National Convention can mean a boon for the local economy, including the hospitality industry. Unfortunately, these days, it also means heightened security concerns. Whether here or abroad, acts of terrorism, bombings, and active shooter situations are a part of life and cannot be ignored. Hotels-particularly those in special event host cities, or those hosting large conventions or multiple conferences simultaneously-need a plan in place to reduce their risk exposure to these horrific events. By developing security action plans and reinforcing them, hotel management can be sure they are doing the best they can to protect their guests and business without spoiling the fun of these events.

Special Events Call for More Hands, More Restrictions, and Proper Planning

In today's rapid news cycle, it may be difficult for some to remember that just last fall Pope Francis visited the United States for the first time with much fanfare. The Pope spent the majority of his time in Philadelphia for the World Meeting of Families, which was expected to bring millions of pilgrims from around the world to the City of Brotherly Love. While the widely anticipated event went off - for the most part-without a hitch, city officials were blasted for over-regulating the event with traffic boxes, and road, museum, business and school closures, and more.

This begs the question: How should cities - and hotels in particular - plan for special events? What precautions should they take to protect, in this case, the Pope, the citizens of Philadelphia, and scores of visitors assembled from a potential terrorist attack or other mass casualty event?

Globally, hotels are a major target for terrorists, and as such, these homes-away-from-home need to be prepared. From July 2013 to July 2014, 89 terror attacks occurred at hotels around the world, according to Property Casualty 360. These attacks led to 398 deaths, while another 540 people were wounded.

From an insurance perspective, these hotel attacks can also be very complicated and costly. PC360 pointed to one such case-an attack on two hotels, the Taj Mahal Hotel and the Trident and Oberoi Hotels in Mumbai in 2008, where 164 people were killed and another 308 wounded. Not only did the Indian government spend thousands of dollars working with victims and their families, the insurance payout for business interruption and rebuilding surpassed \$28 million.

Whether it's a hotel in a city hosting a special event, like a papal visit, the Olympics, a national political convention or the hotel itself is hosting a special event, proper risk management is key. And, it's not just a city's special event that has potential for wreaking chaos on hotels; these hotels also host major conferences with thousands of people from around the world in attendance, and host multiple conferences with a variety of guests concurrently. In all of these scenarios, it's critical that hotels know their risk exposure and take steps to mitigate that risk. In this article, we explore how hotels - and cities like Philadelphia - can get in front of that risk without spoiling the fun for event attendees and hotel guests.

Boston Marathon Bombings Heighten Awareness at Home

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AUGUST: Food & Beverage: Going Casual

Sometimes What's Old is New Again By Mathias Gervais, Executive Chef, The Setai, Miami Beach

Sometimes new is old, and old is new. In time for the 2015/2016 Miami Beach season we, together with our new Ownership, launched Jaya, a modern Asian cuisine restaurant whose concept was made to be a true departure from a traditional luxury hotel restaurant. Jaya, which means 'victory' in Sanskrit, was chosen by our team to honor The Setai Miami Beach's renowned interior designer Jaya Ibrahim and the hotel's first decade of successful Asian-inspired hospitality. My sous chef, Vijay Veena, and I collaborated to create dishes that much like the Hotel, did not focus on just one Asian country but featured cuisine from a number of Asian regions. READ MORE

Fast Casual Craze Creates Long Lasting Memories By Jonathan M. Raz, Director of Food & Beverage, Waldorf Astoria Orlando

When it comes to dining at hotels, guests immediately consider their restaurant, bar and in-room dining options, but there is a new movement taking hold in the hospitality industry: fast casual dining. This trend presents hotels with an opportunity to engage with guests and staff while creating added value, providing guests with an abundance of dishes to explore without leaving the property. Internally, these menus encourage team members to experiment with new cuisine and showcase their culinary talents. Ultimately, fast casual dining allows guests to rediscover food as a social experience, where they interact with staff and other guests while sampling dishes rarely seen on sit-down menus. Hotels can take

One of the more recent examples of hotels becoming intertwined in a terrorist attack during a city's special event is the 2013 Boston Marathon bombings. On April 15, 2013 two homemade improvised devices were detonated during the Boston Marathon killing three and injuring 264 - some critically. That day, 27,000 runners were registered to run the race, according to the After Action Report for the Response to the 2013 Boston Marathon Bombings drafted by the State of Massachusetts.

The bombs not only killed innocent civilians and police, but they also closed down a major city for days. Hotels were at the forefront of the attack and response. In fact, the first bomb exploded in front of the Charlesmark Hotel on Boylston Street, according to Time magazine. Immediately after the bombings, the hotel was evacuated and closed along with all hotels and other businesses in a 12-block radius of the bombings. Hotel guests could not enter the hotels to access their rooms or belongings. In the meantime, the Lenox Hotel on Boylston Street, was transformed into a command post for law enforcement for days.

Events like the tragedy in Boston demonstrate the need for hotels to have a terrorism safety preparedness plan in place. Is there an emergency action plan that employees can refer to quickly and easily in the event of an emergency? Is there a designated crisis team? How will hotel staff communicate with guests and employees during an emergency? Security consultants, hotel associations, and risk managers specializing in hotel operations can assist hotels in developing plans that provide answers to questions like these.

For example, in response to the Boston Marathon bombing and other events like it around the world, the American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute, in collaboration with Cardinal Point Strategies, developed a specialized training program for hotel staff called Eye on Awareness@-Hotel Security Training. The program, developed in tandem with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's "If You See Something, Say Something" campaign, features international security experts and other hospitality professionals who aim to educate hotel employees so that they can "recognize, report, and react to suspicious situations on their property."

Hotels Taking Action

After the deadly terrorist attacks on the hotels in Mumbai, an executive at one of the world's largest hotel chains testified before Congress on hotel safety and terrorism. His company experienced terrorism directly when a truck bomb exploded at the Islamabad Marriott in Pakistan in 2008 and when an improvised explosive device detonated at the J.W. Marriott in Jakarta, Indonesia in 2003.

Alan Orlob, vice president of corporate security and loss prevention for Marriott International Lodging, testified to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs in 2009 to explain what the company was doing to mitigate its exposure to the threat of terrorism. His testimony was also on behalf of the Real Estate Roundtable and the American Hotel & Lodging Association.

To manage their own terrorism risk head-on, he said, Marriott implemented a crisis management program, that includes:

- a crisis manual
- a crisis team
- employee training
- commercial security services
- risk assessment analysts in key points around the world
- an in-house color-coded threat system
- appropriate measures to accompany each threat level
- the ability to screen and inspect luggage with metal detectors when the threat level is high
- in high risk areas, window films and barriers, x-ray machines, explosive vapor detectors, and bomb sniffing dogs
- an active shooter program

Additionally, Orlob explained that after studying the Mumbai attacks, Marriott encourages the hotel industry to implement the following:

- Conduct awareness training for hotel staff
- Develop a relationship between hotel staff and local authorities
- Share building plans with the local authorities if appropriate
- Consider hiring independent security professionals and/or intelligence analysts
- Consider security features during the initial design stages of hotels when feasible

Talk About It

advantage of the fast casual trend in countless ways. [READ MORE](#)



F&B Drives Hospitality and Human Interaction in the Digital Age

By *Adrian Kurre*, Global Head, Homewood Suites & Home2 Suites by Hilton

Many hotel guests enthusiastically book rooms online, bypass a front desk check-in with their digital room key, and choose to receive their bill via e-mail in an effort to streamline and control their own experience – and at Hilton we support (and have led the charge on!) many of these innovations. At the same time, human interaction remains the crux of hospitality. And hospitality is, after all, a main driver of guest satisfaction and repeat business in our industry. Year after year the J.D. Power North America Hotel Guest Satisfaction Index StudySM has shown that the number of interactions guests have with hotel staff [READ MORE](#)



Partner with Local Purveyors to Bring Guests a Local Experience

By *Thomas McKeown*, Executive Chef, Hyatt Regency Atlanta

Faced with new, demanding guests, hotel restaurants are relying on local sourcing, quality ingredients and authentic experiences to return to the glory days of hotel dining. Not all that long ago, the best dining you could find in any city in America was in a hotel. In cities like New York, Chicago, San Francisco, even in my city of Atlanta, grand hotels offered acclaimed restaurants known for their fine cuisine and memorable experiences. People got dressed up to enjoy steak and lobster, oysters and fine wine. For their discriminating guests, chefs served surprises like shrimp cocktail, baked Alaska and smart cocktails. [READ MORE](#)

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While terrorism, mass shootings, and other disasters are not uplifting topics of discussion, they must be addressed. When planning for a special event, whether as a hotel in an event host city or as a hotel hosting its own special event or events, talking about security is critical. With proper planning and staff training, beefed-up security and other safeguards won't spoil the fun of the special event.

Airports have metal detectors, security officers, and identification screening mechanisms in place. A bag cannot be left unattended in an airport without causing a security alert. Many Amtrak train stations have bomb sniffing dogs. Hotels can be host to conferences with thousands of attendees; they too need to have security checks in place.

Hotel staff should be trained to be aware of anything suspicious. Everyone including the front desk, the bellman, houseman, valet, and security should know what normal business is and what may not be. Emergency safety procedures, such as what to do when a bomb threat is called in, should be reviewed regularly by hotel staff and reinforced before a special event.

One major insurance carrier, Zurich UK, provides a checklist for employees responding to threatening telephone calls at a business. The list recommends the employee:

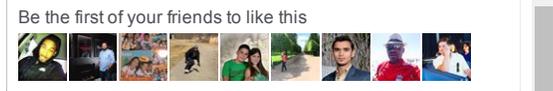
- Treat all threats as genuine
- Let the caller finish without interruption
- Keep answers very brief
- Remember the callers exact words
- Record details of the threat - time, place, type of bomb
- Ask what organization the caller represents
- Note the sex and demeanor of the caller
- Report any background accent or other noise

With the proper training enforced and reinforced, staff can know better how to respond wisely during an actual event.

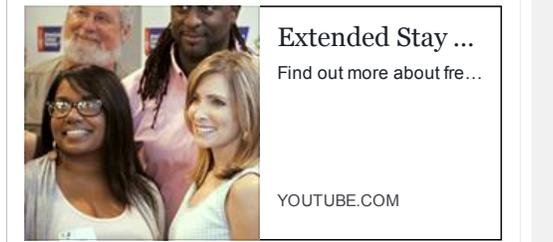
In sum, whether traffic boxes and road closures are put in place or not ahead of a special event, hotels can take actions of their own to prepare. With proper planning, security training and regular reinforcement of that training, a hotel should be able to comfortably host a special event without spoiling the fun or disrupting the comfort of its guests.

Philip J. Harvey is president of Venture Insurance Programs, a national program administrator for select industries, including hotels, resorts and golf and country clubs. Through Venture, Mr. Harvey created a leading all-lines insurance program for hotels and resorts called SUITELIFE. Mr. Harvey has more than 35 years of insurance experience in all facets of property and casualty insurance. The hallmark of Venture is an entrepreneurial spirit that identifies market needs and works to develop unique solutions. Mr. Harvey values employees and business partners who share this same entrepreneurial approach. Mr. Harvey can be contacted at 800-282-6247 or Please visit pharvey@ventureprograms.com for more information. [Extended Bio...](#)

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Extended Stay America is conducting one of the most effective and heart-felt CSR programs than any other hotel group we've seen to date. They are providing complimentary hotel rooms to cancer patients undergoing treatments through a collaboration with the American Cancer Society. The program 'Hotel Keys of Hope' is a winner among those using the services and the publicity the hotel group is gaining through their charity. HotelExecutive would love to hear from other hotel groups providing effective CSR programs!



As TV chefs have morphed into global celebrities in the era of TV reality shows, a new restaurant trend in Open Kitchen Dining has emerged



Coming Up In The September Online Hotel Business Review

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FEATURE FOCUS

Hotel Group Meetings: Demand is Trending Up

Corporations and businesses are once again renewing their investments in people, strategic planning, and training and development. As a result, all indicators point to 2016 being a robust year for the hotel group meetings business. Group demand is strong and rates, especially during peak periods, are trending up. Still, hotels must continue to evolve to meet the changing expectations of group meeting planners and their clients. There are several trends and factors that are driving decision-making which planners have identified as being essential to the process.

Though geographic location and room rates continue to be the most important factors when selecting a host property, food and beverage choices are becoming increasingly influential. Planners understand the value of first-class culinary options as these are often used to facilitate networking experiences. Another critical factor is the availability of sufficient bandwidth for high-speed wired and wireless connectivity to the internet. In addition, in an effort to eliminate unsightly and unwieldy power cords, planners are requesting the installation of mobile-device charging stations. These portable charging stations (which do not require devices to be plugged in) can be conveniently placed in common areas or directly in meeting rooms. Finally, there is a greater emphasis on teambuilding activities that are intended to challenge groups, and bring them closer together. Some hotels are offering scenic walking trails, GPS-aided scavenger hunts, kayaking into secluded coves or rollerblading on oceanfront boardwalks, among many other recreational activities. The September Hotel Business Review will examine issues relevant to group business and will report on what some hotels are doing to promote this sector of their operations.

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