

American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute

The American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute (EI) spent 2009 delving into social media, revising its CourseLine® online course delivery system, and introducing digital textbooks for college students, along with continuing to streamline its product lines, enhancing existing programs, and developing new products to meet the training and professional development needs of the lodging industry.

EI 2.0. EI reached out to new and existing customers through the Internet, establishing a YouTube channel with clips from its training DVDs, and setting up a Facebook fan page and Twitter account. Customers can learn about new products, certification review sessions, EI trade show appearances, and product specials through these social media, and also stay up-to-date on the latest hospitality training news and trends. EI also began regular eNewsletters to customers in its various markets, including the lodging industry, academic, distance learning, and international.

EI's CourseLine® program moved to a new learning management system (LMS), bringing greater interactivity, tracking, communication, and customization for

online training and education. In addition to its many hospitality management courses, CourseLine® features line-level skills training, Supervisory Skill Builders, Controlling Alcohol Risks Effectively—CARE® training, and Enhanced CyberCinema®, with video quizzes to reinforce the content of EI's training videos. EI also introduced three new online courses: Payment Card Industry Data Security System (PCI DSS) compliance; Technology: Security Awareness, which provides the knowledge required to help protect the lodging property, its guests, and employees from a sensitive data breach; and Preventive Maintenance, which teaches the maintenance/engineering department how to use guest comment cards and employee feedback to determine areas requiring attention and how to proactively conduct regular room inspections to ensure guestrooms are maintained to the property's highest standard.

With the launch of the new CourseLine®, EI's international customers are now able to access the online course delivery system, extending hospitality training opportunities globally.

Digital Text Books. EI introduced digital versions of five of its best-selling college textbooks, *Managing Front Office Operations*, *Hospitality Today: An Introduction*, *Hospitality Industry Managerial Accounting*, *Hospitality Facilities Management and Design*, and *Planning and Control for Food and Beverage Operations*. Students can purchase these textbooks online for about half the cost of a new print textbook, and can easily search, insert notes, bookmark pages, and other features.

Professional Certifications. Two of EI's most prestigious professional certifications, the Certified Hotel Administrator (CHA) and Certified Food and Beverage Executive (CFBE) received makeovers in 2009, with complete revisions of their study materials, repackaging the study materials on CD, new certification exam preparation booklets, and for the CHA, an online assessment tool to help candidates determine their readiness for the certification exam. In addition, many of EI's professional certification exams are now available to take online, providing greater flexibility and enabling candidates to receive immediate results for their exams.

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THEN: Founded in 1951, the Educational Institute opened its doors in Lansing, Michigan, to provide training materials for hotel employees of all kinds.



In cooperation with FreemanGroup, EI debuted the TRAC (Train, Retain, Assess, and Certify) programs for front desk representatives, guestroom attendants, and restaurant servers. EI and FreemanGroup also collaborated on a series of comprehensive job descriptions for every area of hotel and casino operations. These customizable job description CDs are available by department or division, or as complete sets.

Two programs geared toward international tourism employees also debuted. The Customer Service Ambassador (CSA) is a certificate program for non-hotel destination employees such as taxi drivers, customs and immigration officials, and anyone who has an impact on a tourist's experience. Promises is a leader-facilitated service training program specifically for taxi drivers. It is offered off the shelf in a ready-to-lead format, or can be customized and facilitated through EI's partnership with FreemanGroup.

EI also entered into a teaming agreement with Sister Sky, a Native American company specializing in hotel amenities and hotel and spa consulting, to develop training and educational programs in hospitality tailored to the needs and cultural sensitivities of Native American populations.

International Sales. Early in 2009, EI president Robert L. Steele III, CHA; David Lechter, CHT, MHS, EI's vice president, international sales; and K.V. Simon, EI's regional vice president for India, visited the Middle East to meet with EI's international licensees and promote hospitality education, training, and professional certification in the Middle East. During their visit, they presented the Bahrain Institute of Hospitality and Retail (BHRI) with the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute Best Licensee of the Middle East award. EI also applauded senior officials from Tamkeen (formerly the Labor Fund) and Specific Council of Training in Hospitality. The award honored BHRI for its efforts in training the Bahraini workforce and for completing a three-year project translating 8,000 pages of EI teaching materials from English into Arabic, benefitting hospitality trainers and educators throughout the Middle East.

EI gained three new Global Academic Program (GAP) licensees in 2009, representing schools in China, Romania, and the United Arab Emirates. GAPs in France, Hong Kong, Ireland, and Suriname renewed their relationship with EI for another five years. EI's Hospitality Education Program (HEP) licensee in Korea renewed its agreement for another five years, and a new HEP license with Qatar was signed.

Out With the Old, In With the New.

EI streamlined its product offerings in 2009 by retiring several older and outdated training programs, including DVDs, textbooks, and seminars. Several new products were introduced, including three new textbooks and seven textbook revisions, three new or revised DVDs, new line-level skills guides and job descriptions, revised tech primers, and two updated professional certification programs.

New books:

- **Revenue Management: Maximizing Revenue in Hospitality Operations**
- **Hospitality 2015: The Future of Hospitality and Travel and Managing Casino Slot Operations**

Book revisions:

- **World of Resorts: From Development to Management**
- **Hotel Asset Management: Principles and Practices**
- **Managing Front Office Operations**
- **The Lodging and Food Service Industry**
- **Planning and Control for Food and Beverage Operations**
- **Leadership and Management in the Hospitality Industry**
- **Understanding Hospitality Law**
- **Management of Food and Beverage Operations**

New DVDs:

- **Sales Tactics in a Tough Economy**
- **Preventive Guestroom Maintenance**
- **World Trainer: Extended Stay Guestroom and Bathroom Cleaning**

American Express Seminar Series.

For the past five years, the Educational Institute has been managing the educational seminar series sponsored by American Express. Through their support, we have been able to bring relevant seminars to AH&LA members across the U.S., including employment and labor law, revenue management, ADA compliance, customer service, and green initiatives.