

HIGH-TECH HOTELS

Hilton Deploys Conceptual In-Room Entertainment Tech At Beverly Hilton

BY CHRISTOPHER OSTROWSKI

BEVERLY HILLS, CA— It's become a long-running gag that the hotel industry is a rather slow adopter of new technologies. But Hilton Hotels Corp. now appears to be quickly disarming that stereotype through a proactive and conceptual technology deployment at the Beverly Hilton here in response to increasingly demanding in-room entertainment trends.

Known as an entertainment personal computer, the hotel version of this technology is the product of a partnership between Hilton and Intel and has been tested recently within a suite at the Beverly Hilton, which already offers numerous other high-tech amenities. Featuring Intel Viiv technology, the system is designed to marry the versatility of a PC with the entertainment capabilities of a television, which in the case of the 570-room Beverly Hilton is a 42-inch plasma display. Through this combination of technologies, the in-room entertainment system can allow guests to watch TV shows or movies with the ability to record, pause, rewind and fast forward; view digital photographs or access personal web-based photos and videos; listen to online music; and check e-mail and browse the web among other options.

"In general, people are consuming more entertainment than ever before in hotel rooms and watching more TV and using high-speed Internet service more," noted Robert Machen, Hilton's vp of corporate and brand solutions.

"We do believe that the need for

hotel in-room entertainment is only going to grow more important in the future. Guests want quick and immediate access to e-mail, sports scores and weather, etc. And if we can become a facilitator of that access for our guests then that's the goal. We're already starting to see this in the home through consumer trends. Consumers are purchasing portable content, and that will shape guests' expectations in hotel rooms. That's why Hilton is an innovator in technology and feels that it's important to get out and discover which technologies guests find value in," he added.

However, Machen further pointed out that guests will have to wait a little while longer before they can use an entertainment PC at the Beverly Hilton because the system is still going through internal Hilton testing. He added that the timeline for the testing is not set in any way and that only small groups of people have used it thus far.

"With research and development, you want to be very careful to run internal testing before you run something using actual guests," Machen said, adding that when Hilton deployed check-in kiosk technology, much advanced testing was conducted, including two months of guest-focused evaluation. "Certainly, we see a two-month evaluation time period for this technology at least."

Machen noted that much testing is required because the Intel Viiv technology itself is new to the consumer marketplace. According to Intel, Viiv made its debut this past January at the annual Consumer Electronics Show.

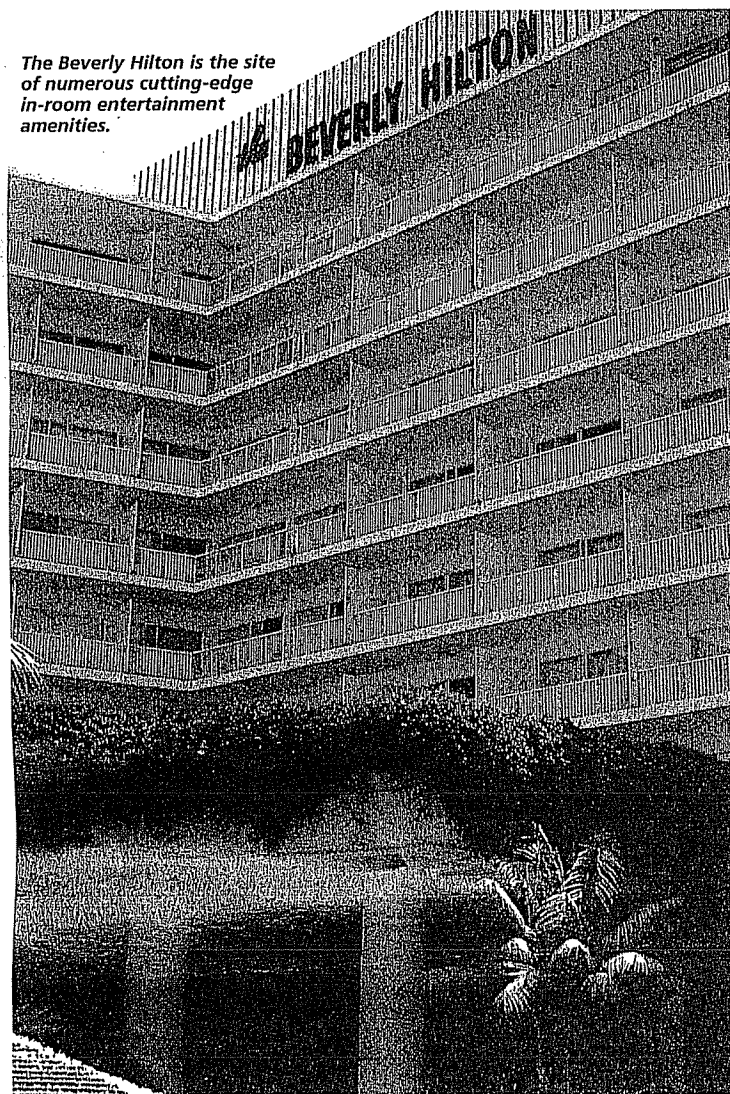
Intel executives added that Viiv was created as a way to bring all of the many consumer electronic devices prevalent in today's world to one place where they can be enjoyed. As a result, everything from blackberrys to digital cameras to MP3 players to laptops to CDs and DVDs can be used with an entertainment PC featuring Viiv and enhanced with a large high-definition TV.

According to Intel executives, outside of people's homes, hotels were the next logical extensions for Viiv, and especially when considering the growing in-room entertainment desires of hotel guests. Consequently, the entertainment PC partnership between Hilton and Intel began to come together in mid-2005. And a previous relationship helped establish it, according to Machen.

"Our relationship with Intel goes back a couple of years when they launched the Centrino technology for wireless and we worked closely with them on that," Machen said. "Intel recognized hospitality is a great place to stimulate the wireless eco system, if you will, and formed a relationship with us to enable

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The Beverly Hilton is the site of numerous cutting-edge in-room entertainment amenities.



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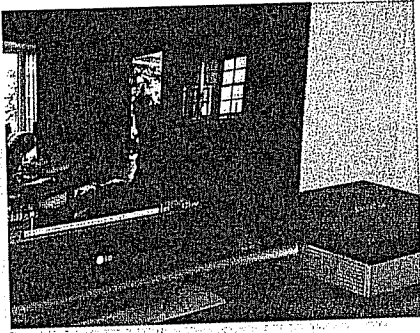
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HIGH-TECH HOTELS

Beverly Hilton Ideal Testing Ground For Entertainment PCs



Hilton Hotels Corp. is experimenting with an entertainment PC in one suite at the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, CA.

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Wi-Fi in our hotels. We had a successful project with marketing around that and ended up being the first hotel company with wireless Internet access across 2,300 lobbies throughout the country.

"It was a partnership formed

on innovation," he continued. "And now we have the opportunity to take the next step. One of our slogans is 'helping you on life's personal journey.' And this technology represents a jump-start toward that enablement."

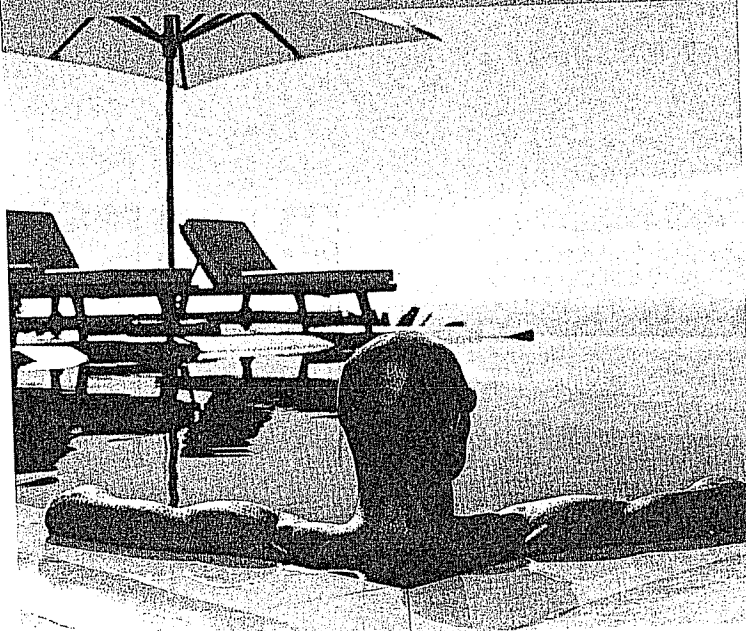
At the Beverly Hilton specif-

ically, such technology enablement is also based on offering guests 42-inch plasma TVs, high-speed Ethernet and Wi-Fi connections, Bose Wave music systems and in-room safes with internal power outlets in each guestroom. Furthermore, in Wilshire Tower bathrooms, 13-inch LCD TVs are installed.

"The Beverly Hilton was absolutely the right place for this technology to work because it gives us a mix of leisure and business travelers that need certain solutions for their technology needs," Machen asserted.

When Intel's executives were asked why Hilton was chosen as the partner in this technology experimentation, they asserted that the prior successful relationships between the firms helped and that Hilton

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Robert Machen
Hilton Hotels Corp.

is dedicated to innovation.

Regarding the price of such innovation, Machen said that it was too early to tell how much the introduction of entertainment PCs could cost. Intel, though, revealed that the home-based system costs well under \$1,000, although such a price may not be applicable to the hotel setting.

Nevertheless, Machen noted that installing the system is easy and that it can and has been removed from its suite at the Beverly Hilton easily. "It can be set up in a matter of minutes," he said.

He also mentioned that one of the great things about the entertainment PC is that unlike other cutting-edge in-room entertainment-focused technologies, it can run off of a wireless network or CAT5 wiring. That means no significant guestroom retrofitting is required.