

V.I.P. SECURITY SUITES: *A New Competitive Advantage in Hospitality*

By

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It's no secret that "times are changing" in nearly every country, with respect to increasing security related risks, particularly to travelers. This trend has continued upward unabated for decades with no plateau in sight. Hotels have historically been high on the list of targets for terrorism and there are few reasons – if any – to suspect that security risks to the hospitality industry will diminish anytime soon. It is NOT just about terrorism either. While investments and efforts to improve physical security in the industry continue, the results have been mixed in terms of varying degrees of efficacy. Balancing security effectiveness with the "guest experience" has proven difficult for many but it is achievable based upon [the author's experience](#) with more than 100 hotels globally ([see "case study" here](#))

There is **an opportunity** in the present security environment to "... *turn lemons into lemonade* ..." as they say. While most guests (including groups) have an increased awareness of today's security risks, and have increased a property's *security measures* among their venue considerations, one guest segment has done this with great gusto ... the VIPs. Celebrities, High Net Worth Individuals, High Profile Political Figures and many others, now place a very high priority and greater emphasis on security when selecting a hotel.

A relatively miniscule percentage of hotels have done any more than viewing their security for the facility as a whole. It just makes good business sense to address the concerns of this lucrative market segment in a way that can offer **a solution that provides a competitive edge in the local area.**

VIP SECURITY SUITES are a rare but valuable amenity, and implementation can be surprisingly cost-efficient and flexible. The author has designed such suites with electronic surveillance, alarm signaling and access control monitoring functions as a mobile workstation that is "plug-and-play" when needed by a guest's personal security detail (think U.S. Security Service, etc.). This cart is pre-wired for use in one or more rooms adjacent to the suite. When the head of the guest's close protection team weighs in on "where to stay", such preparations will almost always get strong support in the decision.

A hotel may also offer the services of some of its own security employees (or contractors) to staff the monitoring system and/or one or more locations at or near the Security Suite, or to supplement the guests traveling security team, at additional costs of course.

HOW IT'S DONE starts with a Physical Security Assessment (PSA) that will include consideration of the subject suite(s) and illustrating some strategic security concepts for possible implementation. The Assessment may or may not include the entire property, at the client's option. In collaboration with the client, a plan and a design are developed for the Suite(s) and circulated to qualified contractors for quotation. Upon a "green light" to proceed from the client, the implementation is supervised and then tested for final acceptance. Afterward or simultaneously, related documentation is prepared such as policies and procedures and the appropriate training is conducted.

Now it's time to **capitalize on this investment** through the property's Sales, Marketing & Communications program.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: *A leading professional security magazine called Michael Minieri "... one of the most prominent people in the industry..." in a cover story and exclusive interview. He is a career security professional and has worked in more than 30 countries. For more information, contact him at MMinieri@MinieriAssociates.com*