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NEWS

Having words with Boe Trumbull Senior Director of Operations, Logistics and Special Projects, SBE Entertainment

Alan J. Liddle 1 | Sep 07, 2009

At Los Angeles-based SBE Entertainment , Boe Trumbull touches everything from information systems and risk management to purchasing and such governmental-relations chores as meeting with chiefs of police.

“My job is to find synergy in systems and programs” that enable SBE to be “fiscally better” and to “keep an eye on technology and operations,” said Trumbull. Before joining SBE in 2003 as general manger of its first nightclub, Shelter, he was a consultant and director of operations for Piero Selvaggio’s Valentino Restaurant at the Venetian in Las Vegas, among other gigs.

SBE is the 7-year-old, Sam Nazarian-led organization that in addition to seven restaurants operates the Sahara hotel and casino in Las Vegas, SLS Hotel in Beverly Hills, three nightclubs, including Foxtail in West Hollywood, event-production company Bolthouse Vox, and Element Films. The company has partnered such chef-restaurateurs as Michael Mina, José Andrés and Katsuya Uechi.

Trumbull says his initial career in television journalism was sidetracked years ago by major network cutbacks that forced him to take a restaurant job. Foodservice employment, he said, eventually led to a stint with one of the industry’s pioneering point-of-sale-system technology companies and, ultimately, the creation of his operations and technology consultancy.

FAST FACTS

AGE: 44**HOMETOWN:** Portland, Ore.**EDUCATION:** bachelor’s degree, English, marketing and economics, Ohio Wesleyan University**PERSONAL:** in a relationship**HOBBIES:** skydiving, precise beverage mixology

What's the hardest part of your job?

The constant challenge to come up with new ideas and new ways to approach things. Without reinventing the wheel, we're resculpting methodologies to make them more efficient, more effective and to provide a superior experience to our guest.

You've spoken before of a pet project. What is it?

Something I firmly believe in, which is the use of handheld POS technology in all our venues. I'm a big proponent of that, and I'm also a proponent of face-forward service, a concept I introduced to our company about three-and-a-half years ago. It gives us a higher level of guest satisfaction.

Explain 'face-forward service.'

Face-forward service means that instead of putting POS terminals on the back side of the bar, like almost every bar in America does, they are embedded into the front of the bar so you don't turn around so much and can spend more time facing your guest. You can see them approaching as you are ringing something up, you can watch over your credit card slip as they are being signed and you are actually faster moving from one order to the next. In a test venue, it resulted in the bartenders at that station outperforming their predecessors that had terminals on the backside by 10 to 15 percent. The return on investment in a single year will pay back any expense you incur carefully designing your bar area.

What's next for face-forward service at SBE?

We will continue to adopt it at as many locations as possible. I'm in the process of redesigning one of our biggest revenue-generating location's bars, so that we can budget and plan to move the terminals.

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