

sportbusiness

INTERNATIONAL

ISSUE No. 161 • 05.11



The sports hospitality sector appears to be getting back on track after being hard hit by the 2008 global banking meltdown. **Owen Evans** looks at the factors driving that recovery and asks the industry's leading providers whether new economic realities have affected the quality and price of their hospitality offering.

A Nod to Technology

Significant improvements in technology are another reason the hospitality sector has recovered in recent years, says James Daigle, President of Sports Systems.

"The right technology and experience can help a company secure greater returns than previously seen by improving process, greater information oversight, and broadly streamlining and simplifying guest logistics management."

Sports Systems has been working directly with agencies and sponsors for the past five years providing technology services that increase the return from hospitality while also decreasing operational costs.

"[Investment in technology] can decrease the cost of the hospitality execution," adds Daigle. "The direct saving is realised by having the computer fulfill many manual administrative tasks, which reduces the staff hours needed to deliver the event."

"Another central theme for 2011 seems to be using digital tools to extend the peak on-site hospitality experience."

"Most hospitality programmes end when the guest leaves for the flight or drive home, but technology can be used to leverage the emotion and connection of the experience from the one, two or three days at the event to multiple weeks or even ongoing and with this deliver great new returns over traditional expectations."

"For example, personalised communications before the event can enhance the anticipation for the event while reminding the guest who the host is."

"Technology, as we know, is typically adopted first by those who can afford it, so with regard to events, that means high-touch, executive-level programmes because they have the budget to ensure the best available tools for every element of the programme."

"But as with most technologies, prices come down so that smaller hospitality events including employee or consumer events can now take advantage of these new tools as well."