cooperation with one of Austria's largest hotel training schools

News from Austria 01-99 (jan-99 - by Helmut Schoeffl)

Austrias section has created a very lively cooperation with one of Austria's largest hotel training schools, the "Tourismusschulen Bad Gleichenberg".

Our cooperation started about three years ago with a request from the school management about getting information on clefs d'or, nationally and internationally. We finally managed to become members of the examination board and are contributing much of our time to this project.

The school was especially interested in creating lessons for front desk training, because they thought that the official study scheme does not give enough support to theses skills, so they started to offer voluntary courses to their students under the title "reception secretary – concierge" which meanwhile became an official part of the training program.

Even the beginning was already promising a lot, nobody expected these lessons to become such a great success. This year there will be about hundred young girls and boys whom we could help in learning about personal service on a clef d'or level, and we are very proud to be still wanted.

By creating a form of membership called "junior members" we were trying to connect the students who finished the course with a positive degree as close as possible with our international organisation. Not many of them will be members for their life time, but they bring new ideas from a generation into our organisation which we need very much. We asked the ICI Paris for the acknowledgement of the lessons, and got this as well.

This years "day of open door", which is held every year to open the school doors to people who want to know about the schooling schemes, facilities, possibilities and chances of tourism professions in general was dedicated to "the importance of network and clefs d'or". We had the chance to present ourselves and our organisation.

Colleagues from Vienna, Salzburg and Innsbruck had the opportunity to show their hotels, their daily work and their career, on a large pinboard several international presidents were represented with pictures and a short description of their life way.

The highlight- and the most difficult thing to organise- was a video and telephone conference which should connect twice in two days presidents from all over the world with the school. Two very well English trained girls where chosen to present themselves as interviewers, and did a very fine job after first moments of anxiousness

First there was a finance problem, we did not know how much these project would cost and who would sponsor it. As a matter of fact we had no idea how many hotels world-wide do already dispose of isdn lines, how many have own video conference facilities, and how many partners would be able and willing to participate. Second we had to find professional video conference company partners, had to get them prepared, organise time schedules and questionnaires, keep in touch with our colleagues through a couple of months, and try not to

overload their capacity and willing to cooperate...

Many, many thanks to those who offered us their participation, who gifted us their time during busy early x- mas days, and patiently answered to our questions:

Diana Nelson USA Gerald Parent Canada Ian Shulman Canada
Ben Wählte NL Robin van Kooten NL Tony Facciolo Australia
Colin Short GB Robert Watson GB Ian Weil Israel
Mogens Andersen Norway Andy Pongco Philippines Peter Wirth Switzerland
Derek Fenn New Zealand Denis O'Brian Ireland Giorgio Chiesa Italy
David Langartner Germany

And the one, who honoured our event with his personal presence:

Andras Gunst, Hungary
Josef Jammerbund, London,
Markus Platzer, Sales Manager Intercontinental Dubai,
Zirngast Michael, from aboard the cruise liner Crystal Symphony and
Wertanzl M., Senior Vice President Crystal-Cruises Los Angeles were former students at the school and participated also in the conference.

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Helmut Schoeffl - Walter C. Manousek
President - Vice president
Les Clefs d'Or Austria

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