



# HIGH-TECH HOSPITALITY

The newest amenities are easing hotel guests into the future

By SARAH J.F. BRALEY

Imagine a hotel room that opens by means of a retina scan — no key necessary. Inside is an Ammique bed, made of 20,000 spring-loaded pistons, instead of a traditional mattress. Got work to do? A massage chair/computer station will ease the tension from your shoulders as you type away. Artwork not to your liking? No problem: It's displayed on a LUX-HDA flat-screen panel that can be changed to suit your style or mood. And there's no need to search for light switches or temperature gauges — one convenient control panel, the Inncom Guestroom Digital Assistant, handles phone calls, guest services and room settings.

This futuristic room exists, albeit in demo form. It's Guestroom 2010, which debuted at last year's Hospitality Industry Technology Exposition & Conference and will reappear at the 2007 HITEC event, to be held next month in Orlando.

We'll still need room keys for a while yet; however, hotel technology is evolving rapidly, incorporating new conveniences for the discerning guest. Following are a few innovations being developed and/or installed in properties around the world.

## Key advances

The check-in procedure is one area of constant tweaking by hotel companies. For now, the lobby kiosk is the focus, but the process might someday take guests directly to their rooms.

"Ideally, you will be able to use your credit card or Gold Passport card as your room key," says Walter Brindell, assistant vice president of rooms for Chicago-based Hyatt Hotels Corp. "If you check in from home, we will know when you are coming, and your lights will be on and the HVAC will be turned on. Everything will be tied in to that key lock at the door."