

Hotel-Room Video Tours Great Idea

AN INTERESTING idea has been announced by Hilton Hotels. They plan to put video tours of the hotels and surrounding cities on TV sets in hotel rooms. Hospitals have used in-house TV for years.

Those who have spent many nights in hotels in strange cities are likely to appreciate this service. Much sightseeing that once provided entertainment is no longer possible, partly because of the urban sprawl and deterioration of downtown sections, and partly because it isn't safe to venture out alone at night in many places.

Most cities offer so many points of interest that visitors who plan to do considerable sightseeing will be able to get an overview of them and make selections for personal visits.

Are there any travelers who have not gazed out their hotel windows and wondered about certain buildings and open areas? Maps and tour guides are helpful, but this idea of giving video tours and identification of such structures could go much further.

Tourists might wonder if that

freeway they see is the one which will take them to the museum they wish to visit. Business people, who make up a large percentage of the traveling public, may be more interested in identifying offices, factories and warehouses related to their businesses, industries and investments.

Local residents may overlook the fact that strangers view their cities from an entirely different angle than they do. What may be so familiar to home folks that it goes virtually unnoticed could have particular appeal for someone seeing it for the first time. This is often true for visitors from within the state.

Presentations of important data about a community could stimulate interest not only in business areas but also in cultural, educational and residential matters. Topics not suitable for tourist viewing could be graphically related by video.

A paradox of sightseeing is that people will drive across the country to visit tourist attractions but never go near those in their own communities. For example, many Oklaho-

mans have driven to Six Flags over Texas, Disneyland and world fairs in New York or Seattle but have never seen the National Cowboy Hall of Fame and Western Heritage Center in their old home town.

The fact is that there are so many museums of various kinds in the state of Oklahoma that it would take a lot of time to make the rounds. Others are being developed, such as Enterprise Square, USA.

Hilton Hotels has contracted with a professional firm to produce its shows and seek commercial support. It should be worthwhile for municipalities, chambers of commerce (even those out in the state), factories and museums to produce and offer similar shows to hotels and other outlets, including educational TV.

To say the least, such shows should be able to compete with old movies, recycled soap operas and inane situation comedies that prevail on TV. Besides benefits to producers that should offset costs of production, video tours could save guests time and energy.