

Hospitality Industry Technology Strategist



[bfridley](#) 27 Mar 2009 3:10 PM

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I've been meaning to do this for a while... it's finally time to stop procrastinating and start blogging again. I've been down this path before and my effort withered on the vine when the 'real world' got in the way. A friend told me recently that a blog is like a shark. It has to keep moving to survive. So, the plan is to keep this shark alive by posting regularly (not sure what 'regularly' means yet though). And hopefully it's turns out interesting and informative along the way.

Hello... I'm Barry Fridley, Technology Strategist for Microsoft's Hospitality Industry Team. That probably raises a few questions right there... "*What's a Technology Strategist*"? And "*Microsoft has a Hospitality Team... What's That*"?

First, Microsoft in Hospitality...? Yes, Microsoft does have industry-focused teams. We have teams dedicated to several industries; Healthcare, Financial Services, Manufacturing, Retail, Professional Services... the list goes on. At Microsoft, we consider Hospitality to be Lodging, Gaming, Foodservice, Entertainment and Travel. That breaks down to include hotels, resorts, casino's, restaurants (fast-food, QSR, full-service), cruise, online travel, theme parks, etc.... *all the fun stuff!* Our team works exclusively with our enterprise customers and strategic partners in this space.

What's a Technology Strategist? After almost 9 years at Microsoft, I think the Industry Technology Strategist (ITS) is one of the best roles in the company (especially if you don't happen to live in Redmond). You can think of the ITS role as the CTO for the industry. It's my job to help define Microsoft's strategic vision and technical approach to the hospitality industry. I work closely with Microsoft product teams and business groups to help them understand the hospitality industry; the unique needs customers and partners in this space have; how hospitality differs from other industries; and what changes may be needed in our technologies to make them useful to this industry. I also spend a lot of my time working directly with our hospitality customers and partners to help them leverage Microsoft platform technologies in ways that uniquely solve business problems specific to their industry. So that's a little about me. I plan to talk about the hospitality industry in general and probably from more of a technical/strategic point of view. I'll also cover some of the things Microsoft is doing, both in the industry and in general. Please reach out, comment or let me know what you think.

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I've mentioned before that I'm part of a great team here at Microsoft dedicated entirely to the hospitality