

# HOTELS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE WORLDWIDE HOTEL INDUSTRY



WHAT'S THE DEAL BY DANIEL LESSER  
*Daniel Lesser, president and CEO, LW Hospitality Advisors, New York City*

## I knew

*(The views and opinions expressed in this blog are strictly those of the author.)*

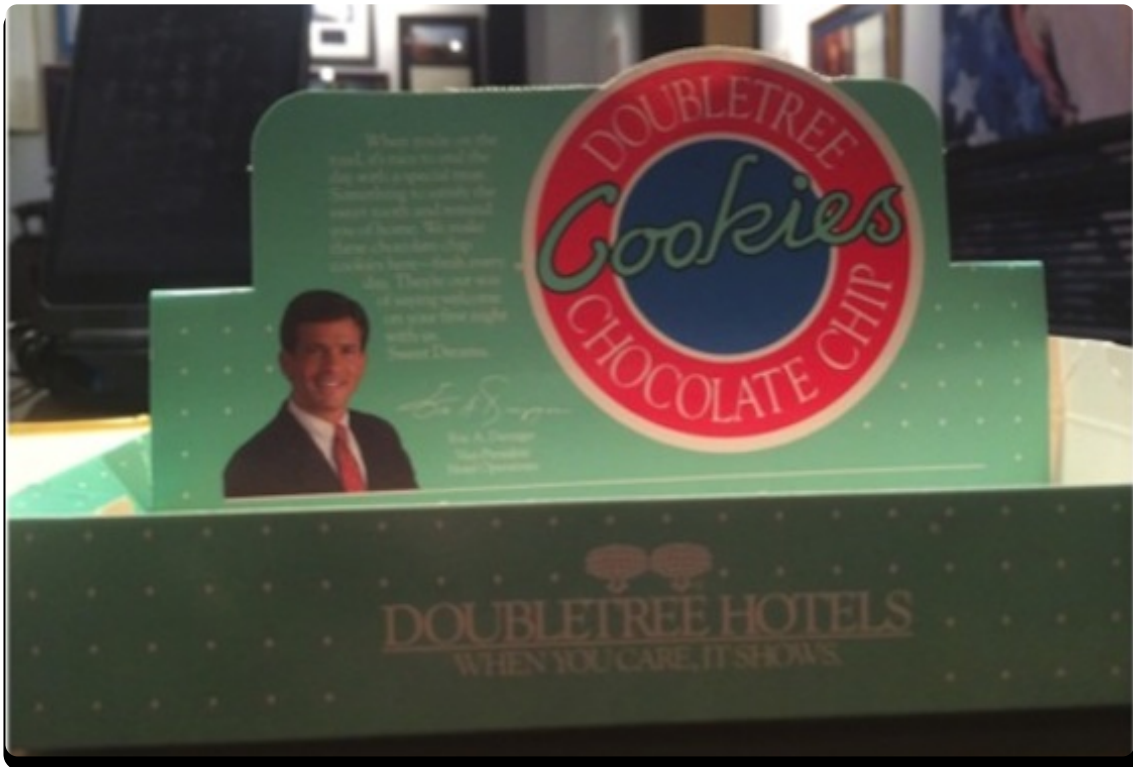
As the first hire of Steve Rushmore when he founded Hospitality Valuation Services back in 1981, I have had the good fortune to have encountered literally hundreds of folks from all facets of the global hotel industry. Every so often, I have come across a young professional, who from the get go, I had the feeling was destined for stardom.

While working as a catering manager at a country club in 1996, Kevin Jacobs Hilton Worldwide's executive vice president and chief financial officer was introduced to me through a mutual friend. Upon meeting Kevin for the first time, I had the intuition that one day he would lead a major hotel company. I invited him to work with me however unfortunately for me, Kevin and I collaborated for only one year. Since then, I have been proud of and happy for my comrade Kevin Jacob's successes.

From the moment I met Evan Weiss, almost nine years ago now, I once again immediately knew I had been introduced to a future hotel industry leader. Subsequent to our working together for almost five years, during 2011 Evan and I collaborated to establish our own firm, LW Hospitality Advisors. While I am obviously proud of our partnership, I am most grateful for our friendship.

All of this leads me to the recent announcement of Eric Danziger's appointment as The Trump Hotel Collection's first CEO. I first encountered Eric during the mid 1980's when he was Vice President of Operations for a small regional Scottsdale, Arizona, based hotel company called Doubletree Hotels. Once again, I immediately knew I was dealing with a future industry legend. At Doubletree, Eric was responsible for the introduction of the novel idea of presenting guests upon checking in with a high quality freshly baked chocolate chip cookie as a "welcome home" gesture; a Doubletree tradition which still endures. Eric's talent, creativity, and graciousness are reflected in his terrific accomplishments at numerous hotel and other organizations during his 40-plus year professional career.

Congratulations to a great guy who more than forty years ago started as a bellman at the Fairmont in San Francisco, now at the apex of his career to be tapped with leading the significant growth opportunities of a blue chip iconic luxury hotel brand.



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