

## **Viewpoint**

Happy 25th anniversary to us; Finding solutions in the near future  
*Dining Insights*, Summer 2020

It was June 30, 1995, a Friday, when I dropped 325 announcements into the mail that as of July 1, Clarion Group was open for business.

The prior April, I'd wound up my job as vice president at the former Daka food service contractor and was ready for something new. Working with colleges, universities, schools and companies to help improve their dining and hospitality services seemed a good way to utilize the many years I'd spent in operating these services.

**On Monday**, July 3, I received a call from a now long-gone Boston computer manufacturer to help them select a new food service operator.

On Thursday, July 6, I received a call from Rudy Auslander, president of Japan Airlines Management Corp. at JFK International Airport in New York City. I'd opened the dining services in their new employee café as one of my last projects for Daka.

Things weren't working out as expected. Could I help fix the problems?

**And Clarion** was off to the races. It's been an exciting ride since.

In 1997, Angela Phelan, who had been an executive at a New York City food service company and a restaurateur, joined Clarion and was active until 2015. Joe Grattan, a colleague from a prior life, has managed tough special projects for us since 2005.

Ted Mayer, former leader of Harvard University's dining and hospitality services, had formed TM Consulting Group in 2011 and affiliated with Clarion in 2015. He's been a leader of our projects since.

**My colleagues** and our clients, many now good friends, have been the keys to Clarion's success over these short (as it seems) 25 years and will continue to be as we go forward into the next exciting years.

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**THE REST OF 2020** and most of 2021 certainly will be exciting as we adapt to changes in the way business and learning are conducted.

Most forecasts are that remote communication will replace face-to-face meetings and time in the office. Maybe; probably even likely. But these aren't decisions you will make as manager of your organization's dining and hospitality services. You will have to support the decisions and adapt services to efficiently and effectively support your organization. We're here to work with you.

*-Tom Mac Dermott*

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