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Web surf poolside at the W in Westwood-Los Angeles

By Valli Herman, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

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In July, the W in Westwood-Los Angeles became the first hotel on the West Coast to install hand-held computers that let guests order food, drinks and spa services or even surf websites about area attractions, directly from their poolside lounge chairs. When it's time for another piña colada, they order electronically rather than wave to a waiter.

The water-resistant devices can be programmed with names and preferences of guests, said Julie Werbitt, chief executive of Tiare Technology of New Jersey, which created the system. For example, when it's time to order a cheeseburger, the program asks how it should be cooked and what kind of cheese it should have. And hold the fries; bikini season isn't over.

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