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Your elevator may need a lift - Century Elevator, Inc. can help

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Last year, when the owner of a Miami and Vegas-inspired night club in Boston wanted to make sure his guests' mood didn't lose steam during the ride upstairs from the main dance floor to a private lounge and bar, he called John Powers of Century Elevator, Inc.

Powers and his team refurbished the club's gated VIP elevator that dates from around 1900. The finished product with chrome, mirrors and glitzy lighting carries out the club motif. Some of the behind-the-scenes, inner workings of the elevator are hard to find and had to be tracked down. "The older a unit, the more chance we may need to jury-rig parts from other sources," Powers said.

"The club job was the ultimate upgrade and modernization," said Powers whose usual projects involve more standard repairs, regular maintenance and installations in offices, residential

complexes, retail sites and warehouses.

What prompts calls for upgrades? Powers said, "Most customers - many of whom are on our annual maintenance plan - start to think about upgrading when a "perfect storm" appears: when elevator downtime, repair costs and complaints increase. Then there's a feeling - real or imagined - that safety is being compromised."

Powers said, "We also get calls for less obvious reasons, like when owners or facility managers want to cut down on energy costs. A new unit is usually more efficient. A separate meter can break out the elevator's energy use. We also get upgrade calls if there's electrical noise - mainly a nuisance to those working nearby -- or vibration, which can damage the structure itself."

A major factor that can lead a property owner to invest in upgrading is when he's thinking about putting the property on the market. "This is where due diligence dictates whether simple repairs will do, or if it's worth installing one or more entirely new units that will add to the overall value and sale price," said Powers, who consults on such pre-sale decisions.

Newer buildings sometimes need more TLC, Powers notes. The timeframe for elevators to become obsolescent is becoming shorter. New microprocessors and solid state gear have a shorter life span than older relay logic equipment.

Among those who call on Century Elevator, Inc., are owners and developers, facilities and property managers, architects, engineers and contractors.