

Winter 2013

Message from the President

The other day my wife Jody said, "now that the holidays are over, I'm ready to ride bikes and plant spring flowers." I'm not sure that it's quite time for those springtime activities but it is time to start planning for a prosperous 2013.

The annual HMRA trade expo unofficially marks the kickoff to spring in OC, and it's a great opportunity to meet other industry professionals and explore new products. Our trade show is the only one of its kind in the mid-atlantic region, and Susan has lined up an exciting special guest. Top Chef and restaurateur Mike Isabella will be doing a cooking demo and book signing on March 3rd. I've had the pleasure of meeting Mike and dining at Graffiato, his restaurant in Washington DC. Mike is personable and gracious. Mark your calendar for his appearance. This will be worthwhile.

While you've got your calendar out, plan on attending the upcoming member dinner meetings. They are generally on the third Thursday of February, April, November, December and January. These are great opportunities to network with fellow members. I've personally made business connections with Keaney Produce, FiltaFry and Barmatrix at dinner meetings, and we continue to use their services to make our business stronger. Make the most of your member benefits. They are made available to you to help you to achieve success.

Lay the groundwork now for a peaceful and profitable 2013. Before you know it, you'll be outside planting spring flowers!

Travis Wright
OCHMRA President
The Shark on the Harbor



TOAST OUR COAST WINS PARTNERSHIP AWARD AT THE MARYLAND TOUR & TRAVEL SUMMIT

At the recent Maryland Tour & Travel Summit, OCHMRA, Worcester County Tourism and D3Corp were the proud recipients of the **Cooperative Partnership Award** for "Toast Our Coast...Delmarva's Wine & Ale Trail". This collaboration resulted in a beautiful new website, www.toastourcoast.com which is a comprehensive listing of wineries and breweries in Delmarva region. Be sure to link it to your site!



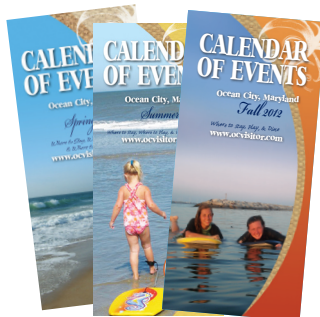
Pictured (l-r): Event Emcee, John Fieseler (Frederick County Tourism), Amy Tingle, John Gehrig (D3 Corp), Susan Jones, Lisa Challenger (Worcester County Tourism) and Event Emcee, Matt Neitzey (Prince George's County CVB).

TOP CHEF CONTESTANT MIKE ISABELLA COMING TO OC



We are pleased to announce that DC Restaurateur, cookbook author and Top Chef contestant, Mike Isabella will be attending the **39th Annual Trade Expo** on **Sunday, March 3rd!** This year also promises to be very exciting as we will occupy the entire new Bayfront Ballroom. Just stepping into the room makes you feel as if you are on a cruise ship! An exciting array of educational sessions are also being lined up. If you are a lodging, dining or attraction member, be sure to register to attend for free. If you are an allied member, we'd love to have you exhibit! For all the info, check out, www.oceancitytradeexpo.com

2013 CALENDAR OF EVENTS BROCHURES



Ad blocks starting at only \$555 including free design services! The spring edition is going to print now...Call Amy at 410.289.6733 to reserve a space before it's too late!

Welcome new members

Associate

Boardwalk Terrace Apts.

1005 Wilmington Lane.
www.ocbestrentals.com

Allied

Bennett Termite & Pest Solutions

Clearent Intelligent Processing

Cohn Reznick

Delmarva Power Energy Wise

Energy Smart Industry

Google Trusted Photo MD

Graybar Electric

Lipman, Frizzell & Mitchell, LLC

RC Fine Foods

Sherwin-Williams

Worcester Technical High School

MARKETING FOR THE 2013 SEASON

As the new year begins so does the time for planning your 2013 marketing strategy. To stretch your marketing dollar be sure to take advantage of the following promotions (most of which are FREE!). We will add the deals you send so they appear on our site, www.ocvisitor.com. In addition, these deals feed directly into the Town's site database and appear on www.ococean.com. If you already have programs in place, feel free to name them to fit into our categories....



2013 Summer Promotion

Stay tuned for an exciting new summer promotion. Ocean City's Tourism Director will be meeting with the town's ad agency in January to finalize the details.



Restaurant Weeks

We set price points of \$10, \$20, \$30 & \$40 and you develop a creative menu within one (or more) of those price points. May 5-19 and October 13-27.
www.oceancityrestaurantweek.com



Hotel Week

This promotion is targeted to reach visitors who do not return to school until after Labor Day. The promotion takes place in late August and features Beach Bargains and Free Nights. Beach Bargains are 3nt stay 15% discount, 4nt stay 20% discount, 5nt stay 25% discount; Free Nights are stay 3nts get 4th free, stay 4nts get 5th free, stay 5nts get 6th free. Promotion runs from August 18th – 29th.
www.oceancityhotelweek.com



Rodney Saves

You have carte blanche with this one....can be a value added item, discount, anything you want. Promotion is up all year, you name date restrictions if you want them.

Do we have your current email address?

We frequently send updates, news, and other helpful information in our member e-blasts. To ensure that we have your correct email address, just send us a quick email at inquire@ocvisitor.com. Include "current email" in the subject line and be sure to include your name and business. We will make sure that our database is updated with your correct email.





16 HOTEL PRICING, DEMAND TRENDS FOR 2013

By Patrick Mayock | Editor in Chief | HotelNewsNow.com | patrick@hotelnewsnow.com

A panel of experts attempted to cast some light on the road ahead in a Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International webinar titled "Keeping Up with Trends." Their insights during the 90-minute session touched on a variety of topics, ranging from pricing, distribution and mobile. Their comments boiled down to 16 key points.

Pricing

1. The U.S. hotel industry likely will see an uptick of rooms entering the market, said Vail Brown, VP of global business development and marketing for STR, parent company of HotelNewsNow.com. There are 24% more rooms under construction to date than during 2011, she said.

2. "We are still selling more rooms than we ever have before and expect that growth to remain strong in 2013," Brown said.

3. However, corporate demand varies by sector, said Ash Kapur, VP of revenue management and distribution for Starwood Capital Group. The technology sector, for example, is "extremely strong," whereas the financial, pharmaceutical and energy sectors are exhibiting some weakness.

4. Groups, Kapur said, will continue to be a mixed bag depending on the market. But "2014 is expected to be stronger for groups than 2013," he added.

5. Widespread demand in general will give hoteliers increased pricing power, panelists said. "2013 is going to be the year to focus on rates," Kapur said. STR's 2013 U.S. forecast calls for a 4.6% increase in average daily rate, Brown said.

Distribution

6. Search-engine optimization and pay per click will continue to be top of mind for marketers, Kapur said.

7. The same goes for channel-mix optimization, he added, which will be crucial in hoteliers' ability to drive rates.

8. Companies will shift even more of their focus to digital platforms, Kapur said. Traditional media, such as print, no longer will be given importance.

9. Online travel agencies are gaining, he said. Starwood Capital noted strong year-over-year increases in bookings driven through the likes of Expedia and Booking.com. Expedia seems to be

gaining share in major European gateways, while Booking.com is making headway in many tertiary markets in North America, Kapur said. Orbitz and Travelocity, on the other hand, are becoming less relevant, he added.

10. "Google Hotel Finder is going to become more and more relevant," he said, noting Starwood Capital is using the platform for many of its hotels in Europe. Still in beta testing, the experiment has yet to generate high volumes—although Kapur thinks that eventually will change.

11. Hotel companies will begin to create new platforms—so-called "vanity" or hotel-independent sites—to increase their digital footprints and drive more traffic online, Kapur said.

Mobile and technology

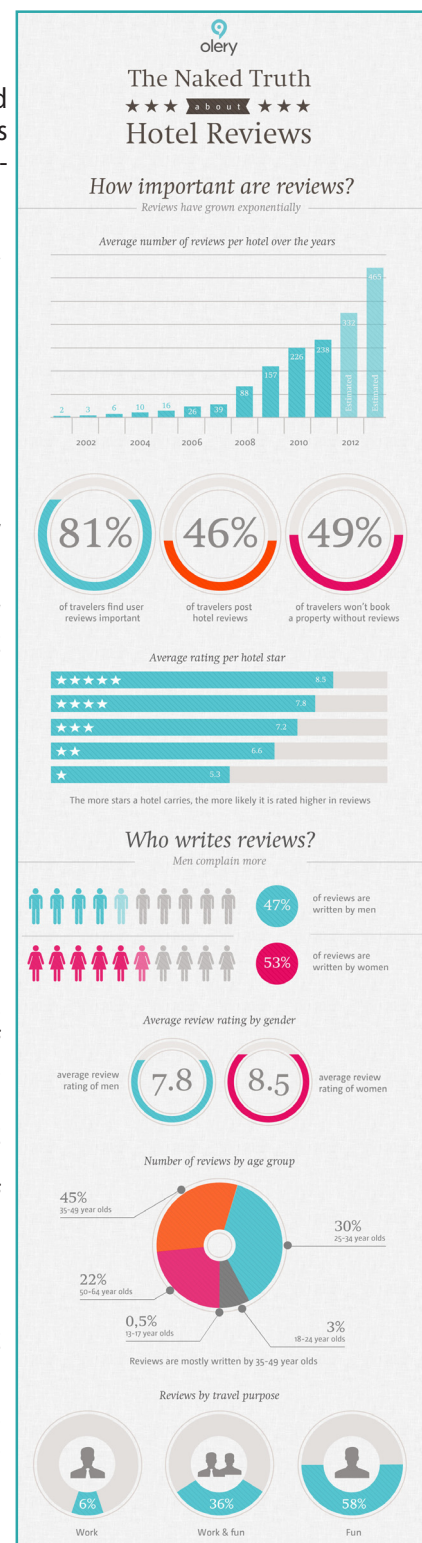
12. The next 12 months will see no interruption in the thundering stampede of hoteliers to the mobile space, panelists agreed. As more Web browsing continues to happen exclusively on mobile, there is an imperative to bring brands' offerings to the third screen.

13. Travelers, by extension, will continue to clamor for more "must have" mobile devices—most of which utilize more intuitive interfaces that will allow consumers to research, search and find the best rates online, said Cristian Morosan, assistant professor at the Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management at the University of Houston.

14. The ability to book on the road will lead to more last-minute bookings, which in aggregate will contribute to shorter booking windows throughout the industry, he said.

15. The "always on" usage patterns will allow hoteliers and guests to communicate more instantaneously—a capability consumers are beginning to expect and demand, Morosan said.

16. Mobile devices and social media platforms also will allow marketers to better target niche customer segments, he said.





TOP 2013 DINING TRENDS: A New Prospective

By: Bob Krummert

Source: Restaurant-Hospitality.com

lifestyle, you can count on every major city to proudly sport local, artisan foodie destinations."

7 SMALL PLATES FOR ME ONLY – SRG tells us small plates meant for sharing will be replaced with smaller, singular servings of meat, veggies or starches for a truly customized dining experience.

8 SAVORY FRUIT – Look for fruit used with savory flavors, incorporated as a touch in appetizers, soups and meat dishes. "Chefs are fermenting, pickling, drying, dehydrating, salting, grilling, frying and generally manipulating fruit more to get new flavors out of what we are used to eating raw," says SRG culinary team member and Top Chef Season 5 winner Hosea Rosenberg.

9 NO DINER LEFT BEHIND – From gluten-free to vegan, more and more restaurants will offer all-inclusive menus and services to accommodate all eaters. "Chefs who are cutting edge realize this and are planning ahead in the kitchen to have the flexibility to meet the varied requests" says SRG associate culinary director Kazia Jankowski.

10 POPCORN IS THE SNACK OF 2013 – Sweet or savory, the all-time favorite (and healthy) snack will pop up everywhere—in ice cream, as croutons, as a bar snack and more. From a food cost perspective, what restaurant wouldn't want to jump all over this one?

1 SOUR GETS ITS DAY – The American dining scene will explore additional parts of the flavor spectrum beyond sweet, salty and fatty, says SRG. "Next year we'll have a plethora of tart, acidic and bitter flavors to choose from as menus feature flavors like fermented cherry juice, varietal vinegars, even sour beer."

2 CHEFS WATCH YOUR WEIGHT – "Butter, bacon, and cream have been chefs' best friends since the beginning of time," notes SRG. "But in 2013, chefs will be working quietly behind the scenes to make your dishes better for you with ingredients like brown rice, high-fiber grains and vitamin-rich veggie broths."

3 ASIAN INFILTRATES AMERICAN COMFORT FOOD – The spicy and fresh flavors of Thailand, Vietnam and Korea take comfort food in a new direction, and this could be the year more restaurant operators position these cuisines as such.

4 VEGGIES TAKE OVER THE PLATE – No longer prepared as just a side or salad, vegetables will get their chance to star as the main dish this year. We know restaurant owners will love the food cost on items like these.

5 KIDS MENUS GROW UP – One of these years, mac and cheese and chicken nuggets will take a backseat to kid-friendly versions of adult dining options. Is 2013 that year?

6 AMERICAN ARTISANS SAVE YOU A TRIP TO EUROPE – "For years, budding food artisans have sprung up in the U.S., crafting everything from booze to charcuterie," SRG declares. "And as their craze becomes a

WHAT'S HOT

2013 Chef Survey



The National Restaurant Association surveyed professional chefs, members of the American Culinary Federation, on which food, cuisines and culinary themes will be hot trends on restaurant menus in 2013. The "What's Hot in 2013" survey was conducted in the fall of 2012 among more than 1,800 chefs.

Top 20 TRENDS

1. Locally sourced meats and seafood
2. Locally grown produce
3. Healthful kids' meals
4. Environmental sustainability
5. Children's nutrition
6. New cuts of meat (e.g. Denver steak, pork flat iron, teres major)
7. Hyper-local sourcing (e.g. restaurant gardens)
8. Gluten-free cuisine
9. Sustainable seafood
10. Whole grain items in kids' meals
11. Farm/estate branded items
12. Non-wheat noodles/pasta (e.g. quinoa, rice, buckwheat)
13. Non-traditional fish (e.g. branzino, Arctic char, barramundi)
14. Ethnic-inspired breakfast items (e.g. Asian-flavored syrups, Chorizo scrambled eggs, coconut milk pancakes)
15. Fruit/vegetable children's side items
16. Health/nutrition
17. Half-portions/smaller portions for a smaller price
18. House-made/artisan ice cream
19. Black/forbidden rice
20. Food trucks

Source: National Restaurant Association

Kudos to **Brian McCarthy** of **Atlantic House Bed & Breakfast** for being elected President of the **Maryland Bed & Breakfast Association**.
Congratulations to **Sara Rutka (Lankford Hotel)** and **Vernon Karst** on their recent marriage.

Welcome to **Jackie Berger**, new **Sales Manager** at the **Clarion Fontainebleau Hotel**.

Congratulations to **Lisa Challenger (Worcester County Tourism)** and **Steve Parker** on their recent marriage.

Happy trails to **Matt Brown** who leaves his Assistant General Manager position at **The Grand Hotel** to assume the role of **General Manager at the Quality Inn and Suites Beachfront**. Filling his vacancy at **The Grand** are **Revenue Manager - Nina Railean**, and **Front Office Manager - Michelle Gentry**.



Congratulations to **Lisa Parks (Downtown Association)** and **Joe Aydelotte** on their recent marriage.

Welcome back to **Robin Lattinville**, who joins the sales team at **The Carousel Hotel**.

Hospitality Highlights

CONDOLENCES

Our sincere condolences to the following families on their loss...

ANNIE BUXBAUM & FAMILY (Buxy's Salty Dog Saloon) on the loss of her father, **Frank Laddbush, Jr.**

THE HALLOWELL FAMILY on the loss of **Evelyn Hallowell**, a longtime Visitor Center employee at the **OC Convention Center**.

SUZANNE JACKSON (Commander Hotel) on the loss of her father, **Robert Jackson, Sr.**

JENNIFER MCCABE & DENISE VENABLE (Smoker's BBQ Pit) on the loss of their grandmother, **Joyce Harrison**.

AMY ROTHERMEL & FAMILY (Kate Bunting Family Partnership) on the loss of her father.

JOHN TRADER & FAMILY (Liquid Assets) on the loss of his father, **James Trader**.

Dinner Meeting Schedule

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JANUARY 17
Dunes Manor Hotel

FEBRUARY 21
Grand Hotel

APRIL 18
**Harrison's Harbor Watch
Installation of Officers**



If you haven't already done so, be sure to sign up for citywide e-lerts from the Town of Ocean City.

Just visit www.oceancitymd.gov and click on the red envelope in the top right corner.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! Lodging, Dining & Attractions... *Register online to attend!*
If your business is not in these categories, call us to exhibit. *Booths starting as low as \$615!*

39th Annual



SPRINGTRADEEXPO

Ocean City Hotel-Motel-Restaurant Association

March 3-4, 2013

Sunday: 11 am - 5 pm

Monday: 11 am - 4 pm

**OC Convention Center
Ocean City, Maryland**

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**DC CHEF &
RESTAURATEUR
MIKE ISABELLA**

at the show



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SAVE THE DATE

FEBRUARY 8th

TOURISM DAY

in Annapolis!

Tourism
Works
MARYLAND

In the United States, travel and tourism is among the nation's largest services export industries, and one of America's largest employers. In fact, it ranks as one of the top 10 largest industries in 48 states plus the District of Columbia. The tourism industry includes a number of interrelated businesses – lodging properties, airlines, restaurants, cruise lines, car rental firms, travel agents, and tour operators, among others.

Statistics courtesy of American Hotel & Lodging Association

Resident and international travelers in the United States spend an average of \$2.2 billion a day, \$92.8 million an hour, \$1.5 million a minute, and \$25,700 a second.

Tourism generates \$813 billion in sales (excluding international passenger fares on U.S. airlines).

The tourism industry pays \$124 billion in federal, state, and local taxes.

SIX WAYS TO CREATE BUZZ FOR YOUR BRAND ON PINTEREST

BY TASHA CUNNINGHAM | TASHA@BIZBYTES101.COM

Are you puzzled by Pinterest? If you're wondering how to make the most of the rapidly growing image-sharing service, you're not alone. According to an October survey of nearly 500 small business owners conducted by Vertical Response, a San Francisco-based software firm, small business owners are focused more on Facebook and Twitter, while their use of Google + and Pinterest isn't as robust. Pinterest is among the fastest growing sites with more than 40 million users in November, most of whom are women, according to comScore. To help you make the most of Pinterest, BizBytes has developed a list of six ways you can create a buzz about your brand starting today.

Get pinnable: Pinterest is all about sharing or "pinning" photos. Make it easy for customers to share images of your products or service by making photos available on your website for download. You don't have to limit yourself to just pictures on Pinterest. Diagrams, charts and other visual images can also be shared on Pinterest.

Keep it keyword rich: When you set up your profile on Pinterest, be sure to develop a description for the "About" section that is rich in keywords that relate to your product or service. This will ensure that your Pinterest page comes up in search engines. Don't overdo it on the keywords though. Search engines sometimes flag pages that contain an overabundance of keywords. A good rule is to use three keywords per paragraph. Check out the Pinterest pages of L.A. Sweets and Misha's Cupcakes, two Miami-based companies that rank near the top of a Pinterest keyword search for "cupcakes in Miami."

Sync your social media. When you're ready to begin pinning on Pinterest, be sure to integrate the page with your existing social media platforms. When you create a new account, Pinterest allows you to connect to your Facebook and Twitter pages. It's important to integrate your social media platforms across the board. It makes the page easy to maintain and for branding consistency.



Create your brand around your content. The point of Pinterest is to share photos of the things that you are passionate about, which includes your small business. But to share that passion, make sure you don't create something that looks like a direct sales pitch. Instead offer information that consumers can use. On the pinboards of Martha Stewart Living, you'll find recipes and cooking tips. On the pinboards of American Eagle Outfitters, you'll notice short, creative headlines like "Romina Lives in Skinny," featuring a student from Miami who was featured in the company's Live Your Life campaign. The board features American Eagle products by telling Romina's story.

Use infographics to inform: Infographics are a popular visual tool used by major brands to convey statistics and other small nuggets of information about a particular topic. Creating an infographic doesn't require experience in graphic design. Free tools like Easel.ly and Infogr.am make it easy to get started.

Curate your content: Curated content is aggregated from a variety of sources and presented as a combination whether that's a blog post or e-book. That concept works well on Pinterest where users present a series of visual images from various sources and pin them on a virtual pinboards.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE TAXES GOING DOWN IN 2013

Governor Martin O'Malley and the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) announced a significant drop in the state's unemployment insurance tax for 2013.

State law requires DLLR to review the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund each September 30. Employers pay unemployment insurance tax on the first \$8,500 of each worker's wages. Rates are based on six tax tables, ranging from the lowest (A) to the highest (F), and the rate is adjusted annually based on the balance of the Trust Fund. In 2013, Maryland will shift from Table F to Table C. That is a significant decrease for Maryland employers.

Minimum rated employers, those who have not laid off employees in recent years, will see their rate fall from \$187 per employee to \$85 per employee, a 55 percent decrease. Maximum rated employers, those who have experienced sizable layoffs, will see their rate drop 22 percent, from \$1,147.50 per employee to \$892.50. More than half of all Maryland employers are minimum rated.

Maryland employers should have received their unemployment tax rate notices from DLLR in December.

No Vacancy For Bugs...Preventing Pests in our Hospitality Businesses

BY: FRANK & SANDY "LADYBUG" HONESS - LADYBUG PEST MANAGEMENT, INC.

Hospitality business owners and general managers set the bar very high when it comes to pest management; more importantly, so do your guests. The experience your guests receive depends on providing safe, pest-free lodging and dining experiences. One infestation or pest sighting may drive guests away for good, no matter how nice the property. And that guest may post their experience on TripAdvisor or some other bug reporting site.

If pests are the problem, then what is the solution? Here are a few tips to help our local businesses get out in front of these pesky pests and stop many from even gaining entrance to your business.

1 Most hotels and other businesses are not built the same, do not have the same floor plans and may not face the same pest threats in the same areas. Have your maintenance and landscaping/gardening teams be on the lookout for worn door sweeps, holes or gaps around doors, pipe penetration holes, and then seal and repair all open access points. Shrubs, hedges or trees should be trimmed back away from the building. Pests can use these as ladders to gain access. Make sure your pest management professional conducts thorough inspections on a monthly basis (or as required in your contract). Your Pest Management Professional (PMP) should document, report any issues/, recommendations, steps taken, and specific treatment performed. Communication is key between you and your PMP.

2 Implement a Bed Bug Action Plan at your establishment. Your PMP should be able to develop a plan for you. Hotel staff training should be a mandatory part of your Bed Bug Action Plan. Housekeeping teams are your 1st line of defense in spotting bed bugs.

3 It is our opinion that two exterior perimeter treatments of your building in the Spring and Fall is a great service to be performed by your PMP. Placing a barrier between the outside of your building to prevent pests from checking in.

These are just a few facts and tips that we have found to be extremely helpful and effective with our clients over the years to eliminate and limit the possibilities of pest invasions. Take the battle to the bug by being proactive, diligent and vigilant in your pest management's strategic battle plan. Winter time is a great time to sit down with your pest management company and discuss these plans.

"Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of learning."

-Bill Gates

Staff

Susan L. Jones, Executive Director

Amy S. Tingle, Event Manager

Jayne Sawyer, Kendra Paulman; Part-time Tourism Coordinators

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