



Hospitality Hotline

Connecting the industry through
Advocacy, Education and Partnerships

News from... THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Welcome New Members

Active Member

LaQuinta Inn & Suites - 101 units on 32nd St.
& Coastal Hwy

Associate Member

Goolee's Grill - 2nd St. & Baltimore Ave

Allied Member

Resort Palms - Berlin

Board Notes

New OCPD Chief Buzzoro and Lt. Mark Pacini attended our last meeting to discuss the Boardwalk. Clearly after the court decision pertaining to street performers, there isn't much leeway for the Police to handle performers. The judge noted, "street performers can sell, rent or offer for donation any expressive material that has been written, created or composed by the performer." Fortunately for Ocean City, Chief Buzzoro has joined the team. His experience and creation of the new enforcement unit, coupled with the desire to gain more year-round intelligence make him a great choice to lead the force. He is working on stronger partnerships with surrounding agencies to better track who is coming to town. Welcome to OC Chief Buzzoro!

EARN Grant

HMRA is working with the Chamber and the EDC to help Wor-Wic Community College apply for a new workforce development grant. This grant addresses the demands of the industry by focusing on what the employment needs are. This grant was developed to meet employers workforce needs, grow the economy and increase sustainable employment. If awarded, we will work with Wor-Wic to create structured training and development programs.

Need Help Navigating Room Sales?

In today's extremely competitive environment, businesses need to do all they can to maximize revenues and manage online inventory. America's dependence on the internet and all things digital have made operating a hotel/motel increasingly difficult. With so many sites and rate comparisons out there, it is crucial you do everything possible to retain your customer.

Please join us for a **Lodging Roundtable** on **Friday, November 22nd** at 10am at the Sea Bay Hotel. We will discuss the following:

- Rate Management - learn steps to maximizing revenue
- Building direct bookings – how to better retain your customer & bring back your market share
- Using OTA's to help sell you – discussion of channel optimization and inventory allocation
- TripAdvisor – using it to your advantage

The **Lodging Roundtable** will be an open interaction with viewpoints from franchise properties, large independent operators and small independent operators. This meeting is only open to OCHMRA lodging members. If you'd like to join us, please RSVP by November 18 to inquire@ocvisitor.com or 410-289-6733.



Hospitality Industry Roundtable

Join CohnReznick and fellow restaurant owners and food and beverage operators to discuss the state of the hospitality industry.

Wednesday,
November 20, 2013

CohnReznick LLP
7501 Wisconsin Avenue
Suite 400E
Bethesda, MD

To register, visit:
cohnreznick.com/hospitalityroundtable



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BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: *Patrick Staib: RHG*

Patrick Staib, originally from Bethany Beach, started his Ocean City Hospitality story working in local restaurants during his summer breaks from Arizona State University. Upon graduating, he started in the Hotel Industry; working from the ground up, moving quickly up the ranks through housekeeping, food & beverage, concierge, sales & marketing and then to operations. His first Ocean City Hotel was Days Inn 42nd street, which he assisted in converting to a Hampton Inn.

Patrick worked for Marshall Hotels & Resorts for 13 years, starting at the Salisbury Hampton Inn as the General Manager, then accepted the position of Director of Hotel Openings for Marshall Hotels and was the General Manager for 5 years at the Grand Hotel & Spa. In July of this year, Patrick joined Real Hospitality Group as a Regional Director of Operations with hotels stretching from the Fairfield Inn & Suites in Chincoteague, VA to the Queensbury Hotel in Glens Falls, NY. When he finds the time to enjoy Ocean City, he enjoys boating around and relaxing on Assateague with wife Stephanie and kids Ryan (17) & Katrina (13).



THE DISH: *Restaurant industry trends*

7 STEPS TO A BETTER MENU *By: Megan Rowe | Restaurant Hospitality*

Delicious food, great service and a comfortable, clean interior all loom large in a restaurant's chances of success, but often that formula leaves out one essential ingredient: the right menu balance. Engineering a profitable menu can be a painful and complicated process, but in the end, this kind of discipline can pay off. Maybe you've analyzed all your recipes and know your food costs to a decimal point. But did you consider the labor to prep them, or the equipment? Are your cooks wasting food unnecessarily? Do some stations get overrun during busy periods, preventing orders from being completed quickly? Menu engineering takes into account these issues and others. Here's what the process involves.

1. Know your true costs.

Kelnhofer says operators should aim to replace any current underperforming menu item with something that will improve the gross margin per plate. "I look at total profitability," he explains. "It's about the cash in the bank, not percentages."

2. Consider that less may be more.

For a variety of reasons, briefer menus make a lot of sense. "When you have a big menu, it creates a wide range of challenges," says Dean Small, founder of Synergy Restaurant Consultants. The main issues are the difficulty of training for and executing all those choices well. He suggests simplifying the selections and instead offering a handful of seasonal specials that will keep the menu fresh without bogging down operations.

3. Look at the big picture.

"The worst mistake people make is cooking what they love and not thinking about the waste," says Arlene Spiegel, a foodservice consultant based in New York City. She advises assigning menu components to one of three buckets: one-third signature items (dishes that define

the restaurant and aren't available everywhere); one-third familiar, accessible choices that will satisfy the most finicky eaters; and the remaining one-third items created from by-products of the first two groups.

4. Consider productivity and efficiency.

Ingredients aren't the only things to analyze in determining the ideal menu mix. The kitchen gear and capacity and the menu need to balance out, or you can wind up with one or two overused pieces that create a back-of-the-house bottleneck. If half the menu features deep-fried foods, for example, that fryer is going to see a lot of action. Ideally, each station should be in demand for roughly equal time during service.

5. Ditch the dogs, boost the stars.

It's common wisdom that low-volume, low-profitability choices have no business on a menu. The opposite category—high-volume, high-profit items—should be celebrated and, if possible, expanded on. If you sell a lot of crab cakes, think about new ways to present crab cakes—ethnic flavor variations, for instance.

6. A taste of luxury goes a long way.

One way to boost the profitability of a dish is to pair inexpensive ingredients with something more exotic, then push the price point. "Take an item like shrimp and scallops with a saffron cream sauce," Small says. "You don't have to use jumbo shrimp or the biggest scallops. You're getting the halo effect of the saffron, since saffron is perceived as being expensive."

7. Don't forget your brand.

The experience, or what your brand represents, is something to remember when designing or revamping a menu. The overall menu strategy—the result of factoring in the target guests, their needs, on what occasions they'll be visiting the restaurant and the facilities/service style—reflects the brand, says Culinary Edge's Goldstein.



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Welcome to **Mike Wood** at **MAD Engineering**. Congrats to **Brad & Kim Gillis**, of **Sperry Van Ness** and **Becker Morgan** respectively, on the birth of their son, Jackson James Gillis. Congrats also to **Buxy & Annie Buxbaum** of **Buxy's Salty Dog Saloon** on the birth of their son Andrew Russell Buxbaum. Welcome to **Shirley Doud**, who is the new Director of Sales for **Dunes Manor Hotel**. Welcome to **Raegan Kendzierski**, the new Director of Sales, joining new General Manager **Brian Romain** at **The Grand**.



Our condolences to **Scott White**, **Whiskers Pub**, on the loss of his mother.



REST EASY: Lodging industry trends

THE PARADOX OF HOTEL MARKETING *From: ehotelier.com Barbel Pfeiffer*

Do You Seriously Think Your Hotel Website Stands out?

For decades now, hotel marketing online and off follows the same pattern and approach: To attract prospective hotel guests, it presents glamorous images of accommodations and locations, supported by more or less creative content, clever pricing and occasionally a really unique service offer. "A picture is worth a thousand words" is indeed a strategy that works but, does one uniform concept significantly make you stand out from your competition, and...

Should Interior Design Really Be the Main Selling Point of Your Hotel?

Much research has gone into the role of emotions in the decision making process. While we all like to believe that our decisions are purely based on rational analysis, psychology teaches us otherwise. Neuroscience research has shown that emotions are indeed an intrinsic part of the decision making process. Marketing uses the influential role of emotions in consumer behavior and has long established the "golden rule" of "stress benefits, not features."

People purchase a product or a service firstly because of its benefits. Features only play a secondary role. Your housekeeper doesn't choose the new turbo vacuum cleaner because of its impressive new technology, but because it will help to keep the rooms cleaner, do the work better and faster, and ultimately keep his or her guests happier.

Hotels have mastered the art of advertising features, but what about the benefits? A few superlatives below a grand image might make for a great first impression. But do they also create an emotional connection?

The essence of "the product hotel" is hospitality and service.

When you think of a great host, certain characteristics come to mind. Caring, warm, personable, a relaxing enjoyable ambience, generosity and easiness, and the

knowledge that you'll be very well looked after - in a nutshell, you'll feel a thrill of anticipation just thinking about going there. How do you trigger this feeling that tells prospective guests your hotel could indeed be a great place to go to?

Furthermore, recent market research suggests that hotel guests are not satisfied anymore with simply a nice ambience and good food, but that they are looking for an experience. How does your marketing address these expectations? How do you truly convey the unique ambience and atmosphere of your hotel, the warm hospitality and the promise of a great experience?

Everybody loves to read a good story

We are now living in an information-rich world, where everyone knows everything about your brand, your hotel, and the company behind it. With information flooding us every minute of the day, the stimulus level necessary to get things noticed and to create a lasting impression has to be set higher and higher.

There is one thing though that holds us back from just skimming and moving on to the next topic, that makes us stop in our tracks and pay attention: A good story.

Why? Because stories are a fundamental part of how we successfully connect as human beings. With the right story, you are able to capture attention, to engage and entertain, to raise curiosity and to persuade. Even better, if it's a good story, it's memorable and we want to share it with others. That's why for example Trip Advisor is that successful. Yes, people visit the site to determine whether a particular hotel is for them, but they also search for interesting stories and comments about the hotel. Trip Advisor would probably be much less popular if it was just publishing guest ratings without the "stories"...

A good story about people and services is also what brings a hotel to life.

To read what makes a good story- click here.



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Ribbon Cutting



OCHMRA's 1st President Kathleen Harman from the Ocean Mecca Motel with Susan.



Our first guests, Donna & Bob Torrey of Happy Jack Pancake House.



Allied Member and expert photographer, Scott Comegys of Xpress Flooring.



Tourism Coordinators and office extraordinaires Jayne Sawyer and Kendra Paulman.

Upcoming Dates

November 2 OCDC Clean Sweep 9-12PM Volunteer to pick up trash in OC
Meet at 108 Dorchester St. (410) 289-7739

November 9 Wicomico Street Winter Festival 4-8 PM downtownassociation.net

November 6-8 MD Travel & Tourism Summit mdtourism.org

November 21 HMRA Dinner @ Princess Royale with the State Tourism Director, Margot Amelia