



December 2017

Hospitality Hotline

Connecting the industry through Advocacy, Education and Partnerships

News from... THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Restaurant Roundtable

As lawyers are actively pursuing clients via facebook and wage issues are hitting the news, we deemed it important to bring the restaurant industry together to discuss the wage & hour, overtime and tipped wage laws. A Restaurant Roundtable is being planned for January. The roundtable will allow the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation and restaurants to have a frank discussion of the laws. This administrations DLLR is not out to get you, they are here to help understand interpretations! The Roundtable will also serve as a general discussion time for members to share their thoughts. Stay tuned for the date!

Restaurant Week Update

Three winners were drawn from those who dined out and submitted receipts from participating Restaurant Week restaurants. All three winners were from more than 2 hours away which showed us that RW isn't just for locals! The majority of participating restaurants have noted that they preferred October to November for the fall, as they are not open as many days and there is some staff loss. Therefore, dates for 2018 are April 15-29 and October 14-28.

New Event Added

The Tourism Advisory Board recently approved a new lacrosse tournament organized by Matt Hogan with Hogan Lax. Shore Wars will be an all boys tournament for 3rd-8th grade kids and is slated for June 2 and 3. He is also in the planning stages for a late fall lax tournament.

WORCESTER WOMEN RECEIVE KUDOS FROM COLLEAGUES

The annual Maryland Tourism Awards Ceremony highlighted the 37th Annual Maryland Tourism & Travel Summit, recently held at the newly opened The Hotel at The University of Maryland. The summit, sponsored and managed by the Maryland Tourism Coalition (MTC), drew together hundreds of the state's top tourism industry professionals for the latest discussions on tourism trends and strategy for increasing visitation and spending in Maryland. Marci Ross, longtime MD Tourism employee won the Tourism Person of the Year. MTC also presented Dr. Leonard Berger, of the Clarion Resort Fontainebleau with the MTC Legacy Award. Dr. Berger was instrumental in the creation of the MD Tourism Development Board and served as its first chair in 1998. His pioneering commitment to pet-friendly travel and his additional philanthropy in the beach community was noted.



Worcester County Office of Tourism won **Best Product or Event (Medium)** for their Beach & Beyond Campaign 30-second video featuring a family enjoying the many activities families can do down the ocean. **The Cooperative Partnership Award** and the **MD Office of Tourism Partnership** awards were presented to the **Shore Craft Beer Alliance - Ann Hillyer, OCHMRA** and

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Worcester County Tourism & OCDC. This award honors an innovative partnership between small businesses that resulted in significant increases in sales for all. From the Shore Craft Beer Fest, declaring October as Shore Craft Beer Month (which led to the designation by the State of FeBREWary), Love on Tap in February, and finally Brews on the Beach in September, this effort featured sold out events and brought many new visitors to Ocean City to discover locally made craft beverages – a true expansion of culinary tourism. The Visionary Impact Award was presented to the **Ocean City Chamber of Commerce, Ocean City Hotel-Motel-Restaurant Association & Wor-Wic Community College** for Ocean City’s Hospitality Boot Camp and Hospitality Supervisor Survival Kit. Tourism’s greatest asset is the thousands of employees working in tourism related industries and this effort builds the skills necessary to providing outstanding customer service. The training will continue each year with new seasonal employees. The partnership also leveraged critically needed state funds available to help elevate job skills.

Congrats to **Anne Dudley**, new Development Director at **Delmarva Public Radio**. Congrats to **Gigi LeKites, PKS Investment Advisors**, for passing the CFP test. Welcome to **Ashley Foreman**, the new General Manager at **Howard Johnson Oceanfront Inn**. Welcome to **Brian Pouliot**, who joins the team at **H & M Wagner**. Congrats to **Vince Pierotti, Grande Hotel**, on the birth of his baby. Congrats to the team at **APPI Energy** on winning Consultant of the Year by The Energy Professionals Association (TEPA). Welcome to Keith Whisenant, the new General Manager at the Residence Inn.



Condolences

Condolences to the family and friends of **Mark Wagner, KY West**. Condolences to **Zack Hanna, Dunes Manor Hotel**, on the loss of his mother and industry veteran Sarah Hanna.

RESULTS OF DINE UNITED STAY UNITED

United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore recently announced the results of the Dine and Stay United competitions in Ocean City. The event encouraged the 28 participating restaurants and 12 hotels to donate a portion of proceeds to United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore in support of 80 locally-funded programs. The competition began June 1 and ran through Sept. 30. As of Nov. 1, over \$71,000 has reportedly been raised, almost a \$30,000 increase over last year’s competition!

“I could not be more excited about the success of Dine United & Stay United,” Cole Taustin, vice president of Blu Crabhouse & Raw Bar and the founder of Dine & Stay United OC, said. “The community-mindedness and generosity of the business community in Ocean City has always been tremendous and this is just another testament to that.”

Winners in the Dine United competition were: The Original Pool Bar & Grill (1-149 seating capacity), Happy Jack Pancake House (150-299 seating capacity), Harrison’s Harbor Watch (300-599 seating capacity), and The Embers Restaurant (600-plus seating capacity).

Winners in the Stay United competition were: Courtyard by Marriott (1-99 room capacity), Commander Hotel (100-199 room capacity) and Francis Scott Key Family Resort (200-plus room capacity). The Harrison Group included 10 restaurants in this year’s competition, raising over \$23,500. “The Harrison Group Restaurants take great pride in partnering with United Way in providing worthy support for so many local organizations and families in need,” said Executive Chef Mark Mayers. “One hundred percent of our funds raised in the competition are put to work in our own communities. I am very proud of our restaurant teams’ efforts from the past two years raising over \$40,000. We look forward to working hard again next year and are proud to continue our partnership efforts with United Way and serving the community we live in.”

United Way helps Eastern Shore residents obtain educational success by reducing the achievement gap between low and middle income students, financial stability by advancing the economic security of families and individuals in the community, and good health by improving access to and awareness of local health and wellness services. United Way currently provides over \$1.4 million to community programs, impacting 84,000 Eastern Shore residents.





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Go Beyond Customer Service

By: Dr. George Ojie-Ahamiojie

Department Head and Associate Professor, Hotel-Motel-Restaurant Management, Wor-Wic



Customer service is meeting the needs and expectations of the customer. Any organization can claim to meet this basic customer anticipation. Excellent customer service is meeting and exceeding customer's needs and expectations. Providing excellent customer experience is making sure that when the customer leaves your establishment, the customer is willing to refer your business to family members, friends, coworkers, and speak well about the company on every social media site the customer uses. If you want to provide excellent customer service, you must have the utmost and unpretentious desire to delight and enthruse your customer with both small and big substance about your products and services. You must also have the desire to serve and think beyond the bottom line. Here are seven things you can do to provide excellent customer service to your customers.

1. Learn how to smile, and smile beautifully.

As you make eye contact with the customer, lock-in the eyes and smile cheerfully. Nothing is more welcoming than the smiles you will give to someone as a first impression. Keep smiling and looking straight into the eyes of the customer, until the customer is close enough for you to verbally express your greetings.

2. Greet and welcome the customer.

Now, when you greet the customer, greet with warmth and cordiality; still keep that smile on your face because you are still in the welcoming phase of the first interaction with the customers. Ask the customer if you could be of any service to them, and be prepared to answer all their questions.

3. Know your product and services.

The first question from the customer may be about your products and services. How good do you know what you sell or offer? You should be very knowledgeable about them. You should be able to explain the products and describe the services with pride because this is what you do and sell every time you come to work.

4. Train and empower your employees.

Are you a manager? If you are, then train and empower your employees. No manager can do everything alone, so train your employees to have the skill for problem-solving and decision making. This will make your job easier, and frees you to attend to other issues at hand.

5. Be visible and available.

There is nothing more frustrating to a customer than looking for someone to ask a question, and no one is available. For the manager and employees, make yourselves visible and available to the customers. Managers, be on the floor of the operation and practice management by walking around (MBWA). For the employees, tend and do not leave the sights of the customers, you are the first line of contact.

6. Listen attentively.

Listening, the most underestimated part of communication. Listen to your customers like you would like to be listened to. Practice the act of active listening by responding nonverbally as the customer speaks. When the customer finishes, paraphrase what you have heard to make sure that is what the customer has said. Then, act upon the information.

7. Say thank you when the customer leaves.

Say thank you! Yes, say thank you. Even better, say "it is my pleasure." Show the customers that you appreciate their loyalty and business. Say, please come back and see us. Even better, say "I look forward to seeing next time." This is better because it sets an anticipation of a return visit.

Put your establishment and business ahead other. Be the one who go beyond customer service. Customers want to be pampered, why don't you do it and see the look on the face on the customers? Until next time, let the muzik play.....



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REST EASY: Lodging industry trends

HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY OUTLOOK 2018: UNPACKING NEW TRENDS AND CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS FOR THE ULTIMATE EXPERIENCE

Ensuring the best possible guest experience has never been more challenging because it extends beyond the walls of your establishment. Hotel and restaurant operators need to meet increased customer demands for quality, transparency and timeliness from the materials and ingredients they source to how they respond to reviews. Serving good food or preparing a clean room is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of customer expectations and touchpoints.

So how does this impact hospitality industry trends in 2018? Competition will pressure owners and operators to provide even more services than they currently do, creating additional challenges in an already tight labor market with high turnover. But adding more services doesn't necessarily mean adding employees. You may be able to leverage technology and refocus staff attention elsewhere, but this means introducing new risk to your operation through vendors and new tools.

1. Local experiences – Hoteliers are taking a page out of Airbnb's marketing playbook to create an atmosphere of authenticity. With boutique hotels and homestays gaining popularity, guests now expect something unique. The increased focus on food and beverage programs at hotels and entertainment venues in the last several years has also created momentum around the concept of "local". It's more than just having a farm-to-table restaurant on premise, it's about providing one of a kind experiences to your guests. Keep in mind, when you organize an offsite group tour with a local guide or bring in a complimentary food truck for happy hour, you've given up control over the experience, but not necessarily the liability.

2. Upgraded meals of convenience – In our on-demand world, consumers want their meals when and where they choose and at the same quality. For many hotels that have struggled to make room service economics work, that means investing in grab and go counters with upscale offerings. These new hospitality industry trends bring even more food safety challenges. Food may sit waiting for purchase or pick-up and is out of your control when it's with a third-party. It's early, but it's coming, so we're already thinking through your risks for drone delivery.

3. Service oriented technology – A lot of the technology investment in the hospitality industry has been centered around convenience thus far. Customers can order at a kiosk or in-app and pay seamlessly without waiting for a check. Hotels know room preferences so guests can check-in on mobile and maybe even use keyless entry. All of this convenience introduced new responsibility for organizations now entrusted with credit card records. With keyless entry, there is added concern that a hack could mean a physical break-in, which has not been lost on the guests leery to adopt.

Technology investment is now being directed towards service and experience elements more explicitly. The smart home is becoming the smart room at hotels installing Alexa, Nest thermometers, and easy ways to sign in and out of streaming accounts. At the simplest end of the spectrum, it can mean being able to track food delivery or texting or messaging in app with guests, and taken to an extreme, robots acting as servers or delivering room service.

4. Service oriented employees 2.0 – What does offering more technology-supported services mean for your workforce? Some believe millions of jobs will be eliminated, while others suggest that employees need to be upskilled from tedious roles to more service oriented roles that tech won't replace. It's early to definitively project the outcome – recall the 180 the retail industry did on self-checkout. For 2018, with many technologies still developing, it may be a way to retain your best employees by providing them opportunities to help develop how your organization responds to new ways of working. What does the most effective to-go order prep station look like? Your best expeditor probably has ideas.

Competition is continuing to grow within hospitality and with more emphasis put on quality and service, margins will continue to be tough. The silver lining is that there are opportunities to grow your business through potentially unexploited revenue streams in prepared food and unique experiences at hotels and growing off-premise consumption for restaurants.

Fager Courtesy Van Available for Dining Parties



Fager's Island Courtesy Van is a complimentary service available for fine dining parties from 6-14, with reservations within Town of OC limits. Pick-up is scheduled 1/2 hour prior to the fine dining reservation. Return trips are scheduled directly with the driver. Call 410-524-5500 for fine dining and courtesy van reservations.



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PREVENT FROZEN PIPES

In an effort to limit the amount of water damage to many homes and condominiums, we are reminding citizens and property owners to follow simple maintenance tips to ensure that fire sprinklers and domestic pipes do not freeze and break. Here are a few simple maintenance tips to ensure that fire sprinklers and domestic pipes do not freeze and break:

1. Domestic water pipes can be insulated or wrapped with an approved UL listed heat tape. (Wet sprinkler systems, however, usually cannot be wrapped with a heat tape.) In the event that a unit is unoccupied for the winter season, domestic water pipes can also be drained.
2. All sprinklered areas of a building should be checked to make sure they are above freezing.
3. Set unit thermostats to keep pipes around 40 degrees Fahrenheit will help prevent sprinkler and domestic pipes from freezing.
4. If you have a dry sprinkler system, auxiliary condensate drains should be drained by a licensed sprinkler company or person knowledgeable about sprinkler systems.
5. Finally, emergency contact numbers should be posted on the outside of the building, which can help the fire department contact responsible parties in the event of a pipe break. If you need to update or would like to verify the information we have on hand for emergency contact information, please call the Office of the Fire Marshal at 410-289-8780. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact our office.



Wednesday, December 13, 2017
Carousel Oceanfront Hotel and Condominiums
8:30am - Sponsored by Atlantic General Hospital.

The guest speaker will be Michael Franklin, President/CEO of Atlantic General Hospital. Mr. Franklin will be discussing the new John H. "Jack" Burbage, Jr. Regional Cancer Care Center which is scheduled to open in Spring of 2018 as well as various other topics on healthcare.

We will also hear from committee members as well as local elected officials and we look forward to seeing everyone.



Clean the World[®]



Worcester Prep students were guided by Maddie Simons, daughter of Jackie Berger, Clarion Resort Fontainebleau, as they built kits for hurricane victims.

Stephen Decatur students were guided by Ally Jones, daughter of Susan Jones, OCHMRA, as they built kits for Diakonia.





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November Dinner Meeting

Photos by KRR
Photography



Marcus Thomas, Clean the World, Jackie Berger, Clarion Resort Fontainebleau, Dr. Ernest Boger, UMES-Hotel & Rest. Mgmt., Paul Suplee, Wor-Wic HRM



Becky Bosstick & Kate Poole, Susan G. Komen, Kerryann Martin, Fairfield Inn & Suites Ocean City, Carrissa Scaniffe, Commander Hotel, Lori Yates, Susan G. Komen



Donna Abbott, OC Tourism Department, Liz Fitzsimmons, MD Dept of Tourism, Film & Arts



Daniel Furst, Revenue Optimization Consultants, Serena Tsai & Carlo DiFilippo Jr., Hotel Monte Carlo



Judy Schoellkopf, Old Pro Golf, Stuart Dobson, OC Today



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College Culinary
Program for preparing
our desserts.

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THE
DATE!

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**REGISTRATION 10:00AM - 12:30PM
SWIM TAKES PLACE AT 1:00PM**

**PRE-REGISTRATION
AND ADVANCE CHECK-IN
SUNDAY, DEC. 31, 2017
2:00-4:00PM**

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