



June 2018

# Hospitality Hotline

## Connecting the industry through Advocacy, Education and Partnerships

### News from... THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### Welcome New Members ACTIVE

Albertino's Brick Oven & Eatery  
Tequila Mockingbird West OC

#### ADDICTION HELP AVAILABLE

The Worcester County Health Department has launched the Addiction in the Workplace Awareness Campaign. As the opioid epidemic impacts every part of the country and every walk of life, this initiative focuses on unique challenges faced by the hospitality industry. Through Addiction in the Workplace, Worcester Health is providing educational materials (rack cards and posters), access to a Substance Use Resource Liaison, as well as training opportunities for Naloxone/Narcan, TIPS training, Mental Health First Aid, and more. Educational material is free-of-cost and readily available, and most trainings are free. If you would like to learn more about the program, Tiffany Scott, Substance Use Resource Liaison, is available to meet in person and will be reaching out to individual business owners with material and information on trainings over the course of the summer. For more information, you can contact Tiffany at 410-632-1100 ext. 1111.

#### SERVICE ANIMALS FAQ

Service animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. (i.e. guiding blind, alerting deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting a person having seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), or performing other duties. Service animals are working animals, not pets. Complete info can be found here: [https://www.ada.gov/service\\_animals\\_2010.htm](https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm) and a FAQ list [https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service\\_animal\\_qa.html](https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service_animal_qa.html)

## TIPS FOR DEVELOPING A SOLID SUMMER SEASON

As we all know, weather makes or breaks a season; however, during National Tourism Week, speaker John Kennedy shared some great tips to help us all put our best foot forward to garner all the business we can! After all, customers' reviews drive business, so be sure to create a culture of kindness at your property to drive positive reviews. Tomorrow matters ~ explore these questions:



- Dive deep into your processes; are they quick, easy & responsive?
- How do you make the experience more engaging? 10% is what happens 90% is how we react
- Why does an employee do what they do and do they understand why they do it?
- What systems are in place to drive company culture?

Here are some tips he shared to assist in your thinking. *Develop a "Line of ONE Culture"* - As the owner/leader, you have the ability to create a solid and unified force of people and energy. BUT, you must communicate and share the focus of accomplishing the same mission.

- Think about geese flying in a V:  
Geese get it and here is how they think:
1. Every job is my job
  2. Honk in support of others

cont.

## THE LEADER IN FOOD SERVICE BEVERAGE!



Beverage Manager  
John Blottenberger  
JohnB@HMWagner.com



Frozen Beverage Specialist  
Bob Ervin  
Bervin@HMWagner.com



### Upgrade your Program & your Profits!

- Coca-Cola/Soda & Fountain Systems
- Frozen Beverage - Blender/Smoothie Mixes
- Draft Beer Systems
- "5 Star" Quality Service Department
- 7 Days a Week Service

### Now Offering... Slush Puppie!

- Well-known and trusted national brand
- Provides strong marketing & promotional material
- Non-fat, non-carbonated & caffeine-free!





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3. Natural buddy system
4. Efficiency matters

In order to teach your staff about the system geese have, Start with Why & Begin With the End in Mind!  
**WHY** - tell them, your job is important because it impacts the customer experience by \_\_\_\_\_  
**WHAT** - explain what happens if customer has good experience > repeat business = more business = opportunity for rewards/more \$  
**HOW** - explain how to do their job properly  
Then, make sure as the owner/leader, you check-in and

"Circle...Circle Back!" - Reinforce excellent behavior, other staff sees this and then they aspire to be acknowledged or rewarded.

By following these simple steps, there is a unity in leadership leading to consistency in service and consistency in leadership leads to unity in service! It all goes back to the three *Basic Human Needs*: Employees want to be Heard and Understood, Valued and Purposeful and Respected as Equal Partner.

This Line of One Culture thinking can create a solid and unified force of people and energy focused on accomplishing the same mission! Cheers to a great summer!



## THE DISH: Restaurant industry trends

### 8 RESTAURANT ENTERTAINMENT IDEAS TO GENERATE BUZZ

Providing entertainment at your restaurant is a great way to interest new customers and encourage returning guests to come dine with you regularly. Today's foodies are looking for a complete dining experience, and that includes a great atmosphere as well as an impeccable menu. Hosting entertainment is a great way to encourage customers to come out and dine during the slower days of the week, and can help your restaurant build a lasting reputation in your community. If you're thinking about adding a little extra something to your restaurant, here are some restaurant entertainment ideas to get you started.

#### HIRE A FLAIR BARTENDER

Hiring a flair bartender for an evening will up the ante and give your guests a night to remember. Flair bartending is often only seen at promotional events and private parties, so bringing it into your restaurant will give your guests a unique opportunity. Entertain your guests easily with the juggling, flipping, flaming-tricks, and magic of flair bartending.

#### SHOWCASE A LOCAL ARTIST

Replace your regular decor with pieces by a local artist and offer them for sale. Promoting an independent artist will turn your venue into a vernissage for the evening. Let guests browse the paintings while sipping their cocktails and waiting for meals. They'll feel like they've stepped into an art gallery as well as a restaurant, and you may even be able to arrange for commission on any art sales.

#### HAVE CRAFT BEER TASTING

Local craft beers haven't seen a dip in popularity since their meteoric rise a few years ago. There are aficionados in every city who look for opportunities to sample and compare local microbrews. Offer a special price on tasting flights of craft beer on a slow night of the week and you'll find people flocking in to sample the latest brews they can't find anywhere else.

#### HOST A SPECIALTY COCKTAIL NIGHT

If craft beer doesn't quite fit with the atmosphere of your restaurant, a specialty cocktail night is another great option. Showcase a specialty cocktail menu for one night only that includes exclusive drinks made from fresh seasonal ingredients. Guests will jump at the chance to sample a cocktail that's only available once in a lifetime.

#### OFFER BOARD GAMES

For a more casual restaurant, board games offer timeless entertainment value for all ages. Keep a well-stocked shelf with all the classic games for your guests to play. Board games are a great ice-breaker which will make your venue the next go-to place in the city for first dates, work events, and burgeoning friendships. Board games are also a great way to convey a family-friendly atmosphere and keep kids entertained throughout the meal.

#### INVEST IN A PHOTO BOOTH

Photo booths are always a big hit at weddings and corporate events so why not offer that same entertainment at your restaurant? Keep the booth stocked with props and costumes so your guests can have fun creating all kinds of pictures in between courses. Photo booths are a novelty that most restaurants don't have so investing in one will make your venue stand out from the crowd. You can also include a small logo on the printed photographs so those memories act as ongoing advertising for your restaurant.

#### ADD VINTAGE ARCADE GAMES

Vintage arcade games are having a new vogue as millennials make up a major part of any business' demographic. If you have the space, consider adding a retro Pacman machine or vintage pinball game near the bar. Not only will this provide entertainment to guests as they wait for their meal, it will also encourage them to stay and keep ordering drinks so they can play longer.

#### INTRODUCE THE CHEF

Many restaurant goers would love the opportunity to get to know the person behind the meal. Choose a special night when business is usually slow and give guests the opportunity to meet the culinary mastermind. Offer a special tasting menu and have the chef come onto the floor to talk to the crowd about his or her culinary philosophy and the process behind creating each dish. Guests will love the opportunity to get an exclusive understanding of how the dishes make it from farm to table.

There are so many creative and unique restaurant entertainment ideas to incorporate in your restaurant. The type of entertainment you choose should fit the existing brand and atmosphere of your venue, but you should find something for everyone on this list.



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Congratulations to **Chris and Michelle Trimper, Trimpers Rides**, who welcomed baby girl Emma, joining her brother and sister! Congrats to **Mike McVay**, the new General Manager at the **Beach Plaza**. Congrats to **Deeley Insurance** on receiving the Automation Excellence Award from industry group NetVu. Welcome **Natalee Long**, who joined the team at the **Princess Royale**. **Fox Gold Coast** announced the Gold Coast Mall location will be undergoing a major renovation immediately, including the addition of electric luxury recliners- it will reopen July 4. Thank you to **Harbor Linen** for donating 5 bedspreads to **Diakonia!**

## Condolences

Condolences to **Lisa Challenger, Worcester County Tourism**, on the loss of her husband, Steve. Condolences to **Diane Kaeufer, Dough Roller**, for the passing of her father-in-law. Condolences to **Dean Wornecki, Affordable Business Systems**, on the loss of his father.

## MESSAGE FROM THE OCEAN CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT: COUNTERFEIT BILLS



As a reminder for the upcoming season, the Ocean City Police Department is reminding business owners and employees to closely examine currency by looking carefully at the money being exchanged. We have not seen an increase in reports recently,

but when our population in town begins to swell, we typically see more counterfeit cases.

Employees should be reminded to closely examine currency when receiving a \$50 or \$100 bill for a very small purchase. Often times, suspects will pass the counterfeit bill to exchange it for real currency, not necessarily to purchase big-ticket items. Business owners are also reminded that counterfeit detection pens can often generate false results. Counterfeiters can use bleached genuine currency to prevent proper chemical reactions from occurring when the pen is used.

In addition, the Federal Reserve Board offers these tips to detect suspicious or counterfeit currency:

- Feel the paper. Genuine U.S. currency has a unique feel. The note should feel slightly rough to the touch. If the currency feels different than what you are used to, examine it closer.
- Tilt the note back and forth to observe the color-shifting ink in the right-hand corner of denominations \$10 or higher. Most bills will shift from copper to green.
- Check the watermark and security thread by holding the currency up to a light. A watermark should be visible from both sides and will match the portrait or denomination. A security thread should also be visible from both sides and match the denomination. When held to UV light, the security thread will glow a unique color.

For more information, or if you would like to have a supply of counterfeit currency information pamphlets in your business, contact Public Affairs Specialist Lindsay Richard at 410-520-5395 or [lrichard@oceancitymd.gov](mailto:lrichard@oceancitymd.gov). You can also find more information at [www.uscurrency.gov](http://www.uscurrency.gov).



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## REST EASY: Lodging industry trends

By: tambourine.com

### WHICH DIRECT BOOKING INCENTIVES ACTUALLY WORK?

As hotel and resort owners strive to improve margins by reducing the cost of guest acquisition, hotel marketers are increasingly focused on driving direct hotel bookings, with the major brands spending millions annually to evangelize the benefits. And according to experts, brand.com sites are already seeing strong returns on these initiatives—although it will take years of ongoing effort to achieve a broad consumer shift—so the question is: What's specifically working right now to motivate consumers to book direct?

Surely, promoting a direct booking strategy begins with understanding that different incentives and messages are effective for different chain scales and geographies. What works for a large resort in California may be very different than what is effective at a select-service property in downtown Cleveland.

That's why it's so vital to separate the actionable items from the generalities.

Whichever direct booking incentive you choose, remember that success hinges upon creating perceived value to stimulate bookings. You don't need to reinvent the wheel at your hotel to do it—you can showcase proven, every day offers and amenities—as long as you spotlight those perks across all your direct channels, these offerings are often perceived by guests as exclusive to the direct channel, which may make the crucial difference when competing for bookings. Remember: OTAs have to manage thousands of properties, it's difficult to impossible for them to keep up with every offer at every hotel.

Looking across our diverse portfolio, we evaluated which book-direct benefits have a low cost, but a high perceived value to guests.

Here's what we found:

1. **Enhanced On-Property Experiences:** Many properties offer differentiated on-property services and experiences to direct bookers, such as club-level access, room upgrades or late checkouts. These are powerful differentiators that hotels can offer, but OTAs cannot. It's an important distinction to capitalize upon, since there will always be certain benefits that can only be provided by those directly managing the hotel.
2. **Enhanced Digital Experiences:** Big brands now offer loyal consumers greater control of their digital travel journey right from the start, with features like the ability to pick their own room, check-in by phone and even use their phone to unlock their room, if they use the brand's mobile app. These advanced functions—not available to guests who book on third-party sites—are highly effective at driving direct bookings, especially among time-starved, tech-centric, road warrior business and "bleisure" travelers.
3. **Loyalty Rates & Points:** According to hotel loyalty marketing expert David Feldman, loyalty programs can do many things, such as:  
Preventing customers from switching / defecting to competitors;  
Provide insights into consumer preferences;  
Drive incremental spend and increased demand;  
Increase share-of-wallet;  
So its no wonder this is the largest and most common of the direct booking incentives used by hoteliers.

Big brands, soft brands and collections have enjoyed tremendous traction

by offering "closed-group" rates to loyalty members. These discounted rates enable hoteliers to offer parity-busting room rates, without violating their OTA contracts. Such incentives—although costly and not necessarily sustainable—are the primary reason most industry experts agree that Hilton and Marriott's large-scale campaigns will be successful in the long-term at driving loyalty.

Preferred Hotels Rewards Program includes many best practices of direct booking strategy

And even at a discounted rate, these direct bookings are still more profitable than OTA bookings, according to Kalibri Labs research. In, "Book Direct Campaigns: The Costs & Benefits of Loyalty," its study of 2016 direct booking campaigns, Kalibri found that the net average daily rate (ADR) of discount loyalty rates was 8.6% higher than the net ADR of rack rates on OTAs. Loyalty memberships—stimulated in part by points—are also a crucial overall provider of direct bookings volume, with four to six of every 10 room nights booked at upper midscale, upscale and upper upscale hotels driven by loyalty members, according to the report. Loyalty contribution rates appear to be directly linked to growth in loyalty membership, which the study says increased 30% to 40% from 2015 to 2016.

4. **Fear:** Rather than showcasing tangible incentives or discounts, some properties choose instead to remind consumers of the dangers of booking anywhere else but direct. This can be highly effective, too, since many consumers (especially older ones) have preexisting concerns about third-party bookings and fear that one mishap with an OTA could completely disrupt their long-awaited travel plans.

5. **Best Rate Guarantees:** Best Rate Guarantee badges are nice, but many consumers have become desensitized to those innocuous graphics and believe OTAs vast array of hotels guarantees lower prices. Savvy hotel marketers are talking things to the next level: advanced tools that display OTA rates on your hotel website (and inside your direct booking engine) have become a popular and effective method of deterring shopping cart abandonment and inspiring direct bookings. Widgets like TripTease are a wonderful addition, yet they still lack the connectivity to actually change your direct rates when a lower rate is detected on an OTA. Instead, TripTease simply reports the disparity to you and then requires you to track down and resolve the OTA disparity.

6. **Thematic Destination Incentives:** This is a great opportunity to offer book-direct benefits that correlate with the hotel's unique story, geography or theme. For example, hotels near Disney may offer discounted or free park passes; or mountain resorts may offer discounted ski lift passes. Smart hoteliers are also positioning themselves as the authentic epicenter of their destinations, by offering curated city guides/maps (and in some cases, actual tour guides!) to direct bookers. Such direct-booking benefits work, because they are relevant to the typical guest persona and they reinforce the hotel's theme and/or geography.



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RESTAURANT



ASSOCIATION  
MARYLAND

## Winners of the 64th Annual Stars of the Restaurant Industry Awards

The Restaurant Association of Maryland is excited to announce the winners of the 64th Annual Stars of the Restaurant Industry Awards. The Gala celebration and awards presentation took place Sunday, May 6th at the Clarion Resort Fontainebleau Hotel in Ocean City, Maryland. Over thirty thousand people voted for their favorite Maryland restaurants and industry professionals. "For the first time ever, the Restaurant Association of Maryland hosted our annual industry awards Gala in Ocean City. Over the years dozens of Eastern Shore restaurants have won our statewide awards, so it made perfect sense to bring the celebration to them. The industry responded with a great party with over 500 people from all over the state in attendance" said Marshall Weston, President and CEO of the Restaurant Association of Maryland.

Our members had a successful night!

Congrats to:

OC's Favorite New Restaurant - Rare & Rye

OC's Best Crab House - The Crab Bag

OC's Favorite Boardwalk Treat - Thrasher's Fries

MD's Favorite Restaurant - Sunset Grille

RAM's Allied Member of the Year - Acme Paper & Supply

Brice & Shirley Phillips Lifetime Achievement Award - Susan Jones

Hall of Honor Inductees: Clarion Resort Fontainebleau, Davinci's by the Sea, Harrison Group, Macky's Bar & Grill & Waterman's Seafood



## STRAWLESS SUMMER 2018

From May through August 2018, Surfrider OCMD is raising awareness and helping reduce plastic pollution with the help of Ocean City restaurants, locals, and visitors. Be a leader in making OC MD a greener place by demonstrating a commitment to clean oceans and beaches. Ditch plastic straws! Restaurants- Commit to providing straws to customers only upon request- explain to customers why- spread the word! You can visit [oceancity.surfrider.org](http://oceancity.surfrider.org) for more information

## NEW PAY BY PLATE SYSTEM IN OC

Have you noticed the shiny new parking kiosks that are popping up around Ocean City? These kiosks are replacing the aging "Pay & Display" kiosks on the sidewalks and in municipal parking lots all over town. The new solar powered kiosks feature a full color display screen which will guide users step-by-step through their parking transactions. Note that these kiosks are "Pay by Plate" so you must enter your license plate number first before paying for your time. There is no need to place a receipt on the dashboard, you just pay and go. In addition, time can be extended at the kiosk with your plate number. HERE IS A GREAT VIDEO ON HOW TO USE THE NEW PARKING SYSTEM.



**Parkmobile**  
PARKING MADE SIMPLE

While the kiosks are new, the pay by cell parking system remains in place. Parkers can still pay for their parking with the Parkmobile mobile parking app. The app can send text reminders when your parking time is about to expire and you can extend your time directly from the app.

PO Box 340 • Ocean City, MD 21843 • 410-289-6733 • [www.ocvisitor.com](http://www.ocvisitor.com)



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## Out and about with HMRA



Fish Tales 35th Anniversary



Breakers Hotel Tour



Celebrating National Tourism Week



J-1 Safety Night - Thanks to Dough Roller for helping us with the Pizzas!



King Charles Open House- Siblings Paul Sayan of Maridel Motel, Susan, & King Charles owner Marie-Noelle Sayan.

# 3RD ANNUAL SUMMER KICKOFF

FOR

**DIAKONIA** INC.  
Help for Today & Hope for Tomorrow

TEASERS DOCK BAR  
at Sunset Grille

THURSDAY 6 PM

**JUNE 7, 2018**

RAIN DATE JUNE 13, 2018

*dj big daddy aka  
dale smack*

\$20 IN ADVANCE \$25 AT DOOR

50/50 RAFFLE & AUCTION

1

complimentary  
drink and hors  
d'oeuvres buffet



CONTACT DEBBI ANDERSON (202) 309-2798  
DLANDORSON@AOL.COM

