



September 2019

Hospitality Hotline

Connecting the industry through
Advocacy, Education and Partnerships

News from... THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Room Tax & Rental License Update

On August 20, the Worcester County Commissioners unanimously approved a .5% increase to the county room tax. The increase will bring the total tax to 11% on room nights (5% room + 6% sales). Rental tax was also approved to be collected on all transient rentals, including short-term rentals. Additionally, a rental licensing program was approved and will be implemented beginning January 1, 2020. Licenses will be required for all short term rentals in Worcester County (OC already has a program) so we are thrilled that the County understands the need to level the playing field!

Harbor Day at the Docks Returns

HMRA is working with the Chamber and Worcester County to bring back Harbor Day at the Docks. It returns to the Commercial Fishing Harbor on Saturday, October 19th from 10a-5p. HMRA is working on filling the vendor tent so if you know any maritime artisans or related non-profits, please spread the word! Details are on HarborDayOC.com.

Mark Your Calendars!

Mark Your Calendars ~ As we approach the fall, please take a moment to add our networking dinner meetings to your calendars. It is always a wonderful time to reconnect, see old friends and make some new ones!

- November 21- Princess Royale Hotel
- December 19 - Captain's Table
- January 16 -to be announced
- February 20- to be announced
- April 16- Harrison't Harborwatch

Fall Restaurant Week



Fall Restaurant Week is rapidly approaching and we are in the midst of organizing our members to participate in this FREE promotion! Restaurant Week has a huge media push and has already garnered a lot of interest ~ we've already had visitors calling about it! Don't think of it as giving away food, think of it as bringing new guests into your establishment! There are many ways to design a successful menu. Offer small plates. Talk to suppliers early and tell them you are participating; wholesalers may offer special pricing to help maximize your profitability and may have suggestions for menu.

Running October 13 – 27, Fall RW features great deals and/or price fixe menus ~ your choice! With October being Shore Craft Beer month, we encourage you to pair menu items with craft beers, or create menu items utilizing craft beer. If you already have specials during this time, we can utilize those on our site under the "Great Deals" – but, you need to send them to us so that we can list them correctly. An official participation form is being mailed next week, or feel free to send us an email that you'd like to participate!





Remembering Past President Travis Wright

As OCHMRA President in 2012-2013, Travis led our Board meetings with such patience for the many opinions and a clear passion for the industry. In fact, through his guidance and creativity, Restaurant Week has become a staple trademark of our group. Our hearts ache for his lovely wife and restaurant partner Jody Wright and the family. Prayers continue to be sent their way. Please join us in a Celebration of Travis' life and all whom he has touched on Wednesday, September 4th, at The Shark on the Harbor at 4pm. A donation in his memory may be made to: Jesse Klump Suicide Awareness and Prevention Program, 10737 Piney Island Dr. Bishopville, MD 21813, or the Worcester County Humane Society, P.O. Box 48, Berlin, MD 21811. Letters of condolence: www.burbagefuneralhome.com.



Welcome **Shannon Southcomb** who joined the sales team at **Clarion Fontainebleau Hotel**. Congrats to **Juli Mills** who joins the catering folks at **Princess Royale**. The marketing team at **Ocean Downs** added **Phillip Frohm**. **Nina Railean Expedia** gave birth to her second baby boy!



Condolences

Condolences to the **Jody Wright, Shark on the Harbor** on the tragic loss of **Chef Travis Wright**. Condolences to **Jim & Annemarie Dickerson, Francis Scott Key Resort** on the loss of Jim's mother, **Sally Draper Dickerson**.



Nominations are now being accepted until September 20th for the Professional and Marketing Awards. Nominators and recipients of all awards MUST be a member of the Maryland Tourism Coalition and are open to all sectors of the tourism industry. All awards will be announced and presented during the Maryland Tourism & Travel Summit Awards Banquet on November 7th, 2019 at Rocky Gap Casino Resort. NEW THIS YEAR – Nominations can be made through the online system. You can nominate once in EACH category and decide how many nominations you would like to send. Any questions can be directed to Awards Chair, Kevin Atticks at info@mdtourism.org or kevin@growandfortify.com.

Additionally, the MD Office of Tourism has 2019 Destination Maryland Awards nominations open ~ these awards recognize the outstanding work of the tourism industry in our quests to increase revenue from visitor spending while providing unforgettable customer experiences for visitors. Follow this link.

CRAB TANK returns to the MTTs and is a can't miss marketing platforms to increase overnight stays in Maryland. If you think you have what it takes to win over the judges, make a live pitch and the "big crabs" will pick the pitch that has the claws to get it done! Last year, the Eastern Shore region DMO's won with their "Chase the Blue Crab Trail" pitch. For all the details, click here: [CRAB TANK on the Gap](#).



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THE DISH: Restaurant industry trends

EMPLOYEES ARE AN INTREGAL COMPONENT ~ HELP GUIDE THEM TO HELP YOU!

WOR-WIC
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION MANAGEFIRST TRAINING EDUCATOIN COMING THIS FALL ~ REGISTER TODAY!

These management classes teach practical competencies needed to face real-world challenges in the industry, including interpersonal communication, ethics, accounting skills and more. Certification exams are given at the end of each class. Students earn a certificate for each exam they pass.

MANAGEFIRST PRINCIPLES OF FOOD AND BEVERAGE MANAGEMENT

Industry-respected training that prepares participants to confidently lead our ever-growing hospitality industry. Learn basic principles of food and beverage management. Topics include basic menu planning, developing standardized recipes, quality standards and facilitating the performance of production staff. Textbook included.

Instructor: George Ojie-Ahamiojie
Tuesdays and Thursdays, September 17 through October 24, 2019 (6:00 pm—9:00 pm)
Tuition: \$317 Fee: \$63

MANAGEFIRST CONTROLLING FOOD SERVICE COSTS

With industry-respected training, learn how to control food service costs in the ever-growing hospitality and food service industries. Topics to be covered include the importance of cost control, forecasting and budgeting, determining menu prices and controlling labor and other costs. This course is 100% online. A login for this online class will be provided to you via email by 9/13. Please be sure to provide an email address at the time of registration.

Instructor: Evelyn Weaver
Mondays, September 16 through December 16, 2019 (6:00 pm—9:00 pm)
Tuition: \$66 Fee: \$16

Notes from the National Restaurant Association:

Without a doubt, recruitment and retention of employees are most business owners pain points. In today's world, shifting the workplace culture is a necessary component to an effectively functioning business.

Learning how to shift the workplace culture takes time and planning on the owner's part. Creating an environment that promotes openness, career growth and a sense of belonging will provide you with a steady stream of reliable employees. The bottom line is that all people want to feel valued and respected.

Here are a few tips gleaned from the NRA Show:

- Provide a 10 minute de-stress break
- As owners, share your struggles - be open and approachable
- Create a positive workplace ~ pick people up when they fail rather than bashing them in front of co-workers
- Have team meetings where you provide feedback on strengths and weaknesses
- Rather than offering shift drinks, promote healthy after hour activities
- Let staff decide which charities to partner with
- Set up team members group texts/chats to switch shifts
- Set up easy take-out/catering processes
- Embrace scheduling to do more than 7 days in advance
- Beef up your Help Wanted ads into a "work in a place as unique as you"

Attending tradeshow, educational sessions and reviewing ideas are great resources. The National Restaurant Association has many great links from the educational sessions at its trade show. Click here to learn more - [NRA Show Sessions](#)



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REST EASY: Lodging industry trends

HOTEL CAMPAIGNS IN GOOGLE ADS: THE HOTELIER'S GUIDE TO THE GOOGLE ADS MIGRATION

With a massive user base and market share, Google has played a significant role in the growing metasearch industry. According to netmarketshare.com, in 2018 Google accounted for 73% of search engine market share for desktop and 81% on mobile. Many people turn to Google first for answers to their travel research questions, submitting millions of hotel search queries through the search engine every day. Smart brands are taking advantage of this advertising channel, and as a result, have found a huge opportunity to showcase their hotel properties to customers.

Whether you're a seasoned metasearch expert or just dipping your toes into the metasearch pool, you need to know about Google's hotel advertising product. This guide will introduce you to Hotel campaigns, one of the latest updates to Google Ads, and explain the key components that go into making a metasearch campaign on Google.

Since its inception, Google Hotel Ads has seen frequent updates and experimental revisions made to both its front and back end functions. The introduction of Hotel campaigns in 2018 marked one of the most significant structural changes to date. Hotel campaigns changed Hotel Ads' structure by introducing a new campaign level. This update transitioned Hotel Ads to a product that more closely mirrors the rest of the AdWords products. In 2019, Google announced that all Google Ads partners will be required to migrate their Hotel campaigns from the Hotel Ads Center to Google Ads. Marketers that are familiar with Google's paid search, display, and other offerings will feel right at home with this change. For marketers who have only worked in Hotel Ads, this shift will take a little getting used to. So why is this change so significant? The additional campaign structure allows advertisers to set multiple bid variations for a unique property, as opposed to the previous structure, which only allowed for one variation. Base bids can now be set an ad group or hotel group level. This means more flexibility in bidding

and campaign optimization, but also brings added complexity to building and managing a campaign structure. Hotel campaigns allows advertisers to finely tune their marketing budgets and strategically segment their audiences.

THE BENEFITS OF HOTEL CAMPAIGNS IMPROVED BID PRECISION

The campaigns structure separates bid multipliers and allows for more precise control. Before Hotel campaigns, to capture the demand for last-minute mobile bookings, an advertiser would increase the multiplier for mobile searches. However, increasing this multiplier would heighten visibility for all mobile searches (not just sameday searches). The introduction of Hotel campaigns makes it possible to create a campaign to specifically target mobile bookings and adjust the advanced booking window and stay length multipliers, thus strategically targeting same-day mobile bookers without disrupting other strategies.

SET SPECIFIC BUDGETS AND BID STRATEGIES - Budgets and bid strategies can be set at the campaign level. This can be especially beneficial for advertisers that leverage multi-source funding or incremental budgets of funds targeted at specific goals, such as driving bookings to a specific region or low-demand/low-occupancy time periods.

BETTER MONITORING AND BID CHANGES - Hotel campaigns promote the flexibility of bidding at multiple levels, including setting default bids at multiple levels. This allows advertisers to group and optimize properties based on performance. This can be especially useful for advertisers with broad inventory sets that frequently add new hotels.

OPPORTUNITY TO SEGMENT BY AUDIENCES - In addition to advancements in targeting, campaigns also offers new opportunities to bid by specific customer segments or audiences, further enhancing the advertiser's capability to capture demand for highly valuable customers.

Read the entire story by clicking here: [Ad Webinar](#)



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Activities Abound in September

A glimpse at the activities folks have requested we share with you.....

Sept 6-8: J1 Student Pop Up Photo Show at the Ocean City Art League - 94th Street
<https://artleagueofoceancity.org/>

Sept 7: Walk for Recovery During Worcester Goes Purple - brought to you by the Worcester County Warriors Against Opiate Addiction and The Atlantic Club
<https://atlanticclubocmd.org/walkrun-for-recovery/>

Sept 8: Wagging the TAILgate party to benefit Worcester County Humane Society
<https://mackys.com/>

Sept 18: Junior Achievement JA Inspire Kick off Breakfast at the Dunes Manor
<https://www.juniorachievement.org/web/ja-easternshore/ja-inspire>

Sept 25: Blues on the Bay at Macky's Bayside Bar & Grill to benefit Coastal Hospice
<https://coastalhospice.org/>

Sept 26: "River of Hope" Garden Dedication at the Atlantic Club to celebrate Worcester Goes Purple
<https://atlanticclubocmd.org>

Sept 27: MD Fire Chiefs Association Annual Golf Tournament - sign up to golf or sponsor at:
<http://mdchief.org/>

Ghost Tours Return at Ripley's after all of the lights and sounds are out ~ Friday and Saturday nights starting September 6 and running through November 30 at 8:00 pm. Spaces are limited so call 410-289-5600 to reserve your spot!

Worcester Goes Purple wants to spread our message of hope and compassion. A single action can make a difference in the community, and that collective action can greatly impact the world. Join us!



Race Organizers are reaching out to everyone in the Ocean City area to see if you would be interested in volunteering at the upcoming **SPARTAN RACE Ocean City Sprint on October 5th** at the Inlet Parking lot. SPARTAN RACE offers either a free race for the teams OR a fundraising opportunity! Volunteers help check-in racers in registration, assist within their exciting festival area which includes start and finish lines, and lend a hand out on the epic SPARTAN RACE course to help motivate and guide participants through the race and obstacles. Help make this race a great one for the Town and every Spartan who crosses that start line!

Volunteers receive awesome perks:

- Free bag check
- Spartan Support T-shirt
- Free race entry (which can be used in Hawaii or at a future US event)
- Fundraising Opportunity for groups 5+
- Light Snacks and water
- Sandwich for lunch

Here is the link for signing up - [click here](#)

PO Box 340 • Ocean City, MD 21843 • 410-289-6733 • www.ocvisitor.com



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*Out and About with
OCHMRA*



Enjoying the MD Tourism Coalition Summer Soiree at the Princess Royale: Left: Susan Jones OCHMRA, Ruth Waters & Sara Simon Harrison Group Sales and Melanie Pursel Chamber and below the Princess Royale crew of Derek Majewski, Alexandra Margiean and Juli Mills



Congrats to **Buddy Jenkins** on receiving the **MD Comptroller's Cornerstone Business Award** for local business excellence!

Pictured L to R: Councilman John Gehrig, Delegate Wayne Hartman, Buddy Jenkins, Comptroller Peter Franchot, Congressman

Andy Harris, Mayor Rick Meehan and Worcester County Sheriff Matt Crisafulli