



April 2014

# Hospitality Hotline

Connecting the industry through  
Advocacy, Education and Partnerships

## News from... THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Comcast Update

Tom Worley, Gov't Affairs Manager, met with OCHMRA Directors to discuss bulk hospitality accounts and the issues many of our members have been experiencing. Now that Comcast no longer offers seasonal disconnect service, annual contracts will become the norm. Here are a few helpful numbers that Mr. Worley provided. General issues 877-229-5999, Renewal contracts for hotels/motels 855-753-8269 and for apartments 855-638-2855, new clients are directed to David Travis at 302-236-1880. Additionally, Mr. Worley noted he is happy to help anyone navigate their concerns. He can be reached at 302-672-5936.

### Restaurant Week Returns

In order to help drive business during the early season, Restaurant Week will return running from May 4 - 18. This member only promotion is free to participate and is designed around four price-points: \$10-20-30-40. Restaurants who escape from their normal menu and design special creative menus are the ones who have had the most success. Anyone offering a wine pairing, beer tasting, complimentary wine with early meal, etc, will be added to the Bonus Bites & Beverage area of the website. All menus and specials are uploaded to [www.oceancityrestaurantweek.com](http://www.oceancityrestaurantweek.com). Diners get very excited about this promotion, and like to browse menus prior to dining out; so please send menus no later than April 25th. Call or email us for more info!

## 40th Annual Trade Expo Continues to Fuel the Budget

Thank you to everyone for supporting the Association's tradeshow! As you know, this annual tradition provides the financial stability for our non-profit group. A special thank you to Senator Mathias for leading the Ribbon Cutting and to Mayor Fish Powell and Councilman Mitrecic for joining the festivities. With a redesigned floorplan, we were able to accommodate 400 exhibit spaces and welcome 5,500 attendees. We could not manage the show, without the volunteer support of so many members; take a look to see who lent a hand!



Andy Adkins - MD Coast Pizza Huts  
Pat Ambler-Perry- Boardwalk Hotel Group  
Danelle Amos - Beachwalk Hotel  
Rogelio Antone - Trimper's Rides  
Lisa Aydelotte - Downtown Association  
Christie Boden - Fenwick Inn  
Joel Brous - Flamingo Motel  
Dorothea Calebrese - Princess Royale  
MaryBeth Carozza - Candidate for Delegate  
Karen Cramer  
Scott Dahlberg - Retired from Wor-Wic  
Annemarie Dickerson - Francis Scott Key  
Shirley Doud - Dunes Manor Hotel  
Mary Eastman - Cayman Suites Hotel  
Mark Elman - Clarion Fontainebleau  
Whitney Fasano - La Quinta Inn & Suites  
Reba Felty - Comfort Inn Gold Coast  
Gary Figgs - Seacrets  
Greer Groves - MAD Engineering  
Matt Groves - MAD Engineering  
Sandy Hale - Hale Miller Group  
Jen & Dan Hallon - MAD Engineering  
Pat Harman - Commander Hotel  
Hale Harrison - Harrison Group  
Jeff Hicks - Castle In the Sand  
Shelly Harwood - Seabay Hotel  
Nancy Hoeflich - Retired Royal Plus  
Marie Hopper - Holiday Inn Express

Harry & Madalaine How - MAD Engineering  
Patricia Ilczuk-Lavanceau - Comcast Spotlight  
Suzanne Jackson - Commander Hotel  
Paul Kahn - Tideland's Caribbean  
Stan Kahn - Carousel Resort Hotel  
Bruce & Carolyn Kennington - Senior Cigars  
Dean Langrall - Boardwalk Hotel Group  
Miles Lederer - Dunes Manor Hotel  
Judy LeMaster  
John Lewis - Talbot Inn/MR Ducks  
Chloe McKenna - Princess Royale  
Joyce Melocik  
Brian Mushrush - Phillips Crab House  
Dawn Nock - Princess Bayside Hotel  
Austin Purnell - OC Motels  
John Reho - Trimper's Rides  
Lisa Roberts - Princess Royale  
Bill Salvatore - Eden Roc Motel  
Darren Schaffer - Phillips Crab House  
Dave Shaffer - Comcast Spotlight  
Martha Strickland - Princess Royale  
Tom Tawney - Cayman Suites Hotel  
Lauren Taylor - Captain's Table  
Rebecca Taylor - Captain's Table  
Bob Torrey - Happy Jack Pancake House  
Chris Trimper - Trimper's Rides  
Charlie Twigg - Trimper's Rides  
Mike Wood - MAD Engineering  
Jay Warrington - Northeastern Supply



# Hospitality Hotline

Connecting the industry through  
Advocacy, Education and Partnerships



## THE DISH: Restaurant industry trends

### 2014 - INTERNATIONAL STUDENT WORKFORCE CONFERENCE

#### EMPLOYERS & MANAGERS

The summer season is just around the corner - Are you prepared ??

- New regulations for international students are now in effect. *How will these regulations affect your business?*
- Enhancing the cultural experience through planned events
- Outreach programs
- Storm & Safety program updates
- Housing

Everything you need to know about hiring international students from the people who know it best. Plus, you will have the chance to meet representatives from the sponsoring organizations that connect international students with employers.

**Who should attend?** Owners, Managers, Human Resources & Payroll Personell

**Location:** Carousel Hotel 118th St - Ocean City, MD

**Date:** April 8th - 2014

**Time:** 8:30 am - 1:00 pm; Check-In 8:00 AM,  
Conference Begins 8:30

**Cost:** FREE! Includes complimentary continental breakfast

**\*\*Please RSVP no later than Friday, April 4, 2014. Click here or call the Chamber at 410-2113-0144 ext. 104**



OCEAN CITY  
Maryland



## LET'S WORK TOGETHER

You are invited to participate in the Ron Jon Referral Program. Ron Jon provides discount cards for distribution to your guests and you earn a rebate for every card redeemed at Ron Jon Surf Shop. No limit on rebate earnings.

To participate or receive more information, contact Tracey Gray at [Traceyg@rjss.com](mailto:Traceyg@rjss.com) or 321-799-8880 x1048.





# Hospitality Hotline

Connecting the industry through  
Advocacy, Education and Partnerships

## ★ Member highlights ★

Congratulations to HMRA President **Chris Trimper** of **Trimpers Rides** and his wife, Michelle on the birth of son, Christopher. A warm welcome to **Greer Groves**, who is now part of the **MAD Engineering** staff. Another Congratulations to the **MAD Engineering** Family, Jennifer & Dan Hallon, on the birth of daughter, Madison Olivia. Congratulations to **Chris & Murray Wall** of **Harborside**, on the birth of daughter, Sarah. Welcome to the **Dunes Manor** General Manager, **Kyle Johnson**, as well as New Food & Beverage Director, **Miles Lederer**. Congratulations to **Alane Emerson**, the new General Manager at **Tanger Outlets**. Congratulations to **Jason Gulshen**, General Manager of **Holiday Inn Oceanfront**, on the birth of his daughter, Kendal. Congrats to the **Wilde Family** on the recent purchase of the **Empress Motel**, and welcome home to their son **Ryan** who will be joining the family business.

## Condolences

Our condolences to **Paul Suplee**, of **Wor-Wic** on the loss of his mother. Condolences to the **Michael Lawson & Family, Barn 34**, on the loss of their mother, Angeline Hobbs.



## REST EASY: Lodging industry trends

**ARE YOU A HOTEL MARKETING DINOSAUR? EIGHT WAYS TO AVOID EXTINCTION.** By: **Dave Spector**

[FULL ARTICLE HERE →](#)

My partner and I attended a fancy dinner at a major tourism conference recently. We were seated next to the GM and Director of Sales & Marketing for a fairly large independent resort. When they asked about our Company, we explained that we helped hoteliers increase direct bookings using advanced digital marketing techniques.

They nodded and smiled and exchanged curious glances at each other. After our brief explanation... and a long awkward pause, the GM asked with genuine sincerity: "Isn't that what we pay the OTAs for?"

That incident reminded us that some hotel marketers are still stuck in the past when it comes to marketing... using the same old undifferentiated techniques year after year. By failing to evolve, these hotel marketing "dinosaurs" are endangering their property owner's investments and their own livelihoods.

Are you evolving and using new marketing techniques to drive revenue at the lowest possible cost?

Here's eight ways to avoid becoming a hotel marketing dinosaur:

- **Embrace your inner geek:** Marketing and technology are more intertwined than ever. Understanding the systems that impact your marketing results (PMS, CRM, CRS, GDS, Delphi, Google Analytics, Omniture, etc), their differences and outputs are critical to staying ahead of the competition and bolstering the confidence of your owners/management.
- **Flip your OTA ratio:** How do you explain to your boss that someone else does a better job of marketing your property than you do? Stop overpaying the OTAs to siphon your revenues. Take a portion of the fees you pay to OTAs and launch your own marketing initiatives to drive direct bookings on your website. OTAs can still send incremental bookings, but more should come from your own direct channel!
- **Harness the power of CRM:** PMS and CRM systems offer hotel marketers a treasure trove of data about past guests. Who are your best guests based on recency, frequency and monetary value? Who spends more in the spa on summer weekdays? Dig

into your data and you'll gain valuable insight into your guests' behavior... which you can use to generate relevant promos that drive repeat visits.

- **Learn to love stats:** ADR, RevPar and AOR are important industry metrics, but more and more owners want to hear about MCPS (marketing cost per sale), ROAS (return on ad spend), look-to-book ratios, availability checks, bounce rates and other KPIs (key performance indicators) of your marketing performance. Develop a list (less than 5) of the key marketing indicators signaling future success or weakness for your property.

- **Be social (online):** By monitoring and participating in your social media activities, you'll give guests a sense of transparency, honesty, authentic local flavor and personal on-site management attention.

- **Be social (offline):** Get to know the leaders at nearby cultural centers, attractions and large companies. If these folks know your property and know you, they'll include you in their own planning... driving unlimited direct bookings revenue at virtually no cost!

- **Don't wait for the flag:** When you pay for the rights to fly a well-known flag over your hotel, you're paying primarily for marketing resources driven by a remote team of folks at the brand-level who often have to service hundreds of properties like yours at the same time. If you're not getting fast turnaround times, compelling materials and measurable results.... take matters into your own hands.

- **Break the clutter:** Research shows that consumers see more than 2,000 marketing messages every day. Why should they respond to yours? If it's not provocative, or fails to communicate a unique benefit... chances are you will see no ROI. Your marketing should be memorable, likeable, persuasive and truthful. Your marketing messages should showcase compelling photography and always, always offer a meaningful CTA (call to action) that leads to a frictionless direct booking experience (phone and/or web).



# Hospitality Hotline

**Connecting the industry through  
Advocacy, Education and Partnerships**

## BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: *Austin Purnell*



Growing up locally, surrounded by hospitality parents and grandparents, has led this fourth-generation hotelier to where he is today; General Manager of the Econolodge Oceanblock located on 145th Street. Austin began working in the family business at the age of 16 in the Spinnaker Motel and in 2010, he moved up to General Manager of another family property, the Thunderbird Beach Motel. His passion for people and hotel management is evident as he truly enjoys getting to know the people that come visit OC. He also enjoys serving the community through his commitment as a volunteer at the Berlin Fire Company and as chairman of Worcester County chapter of Ducks Unlimited. You could say that being born and raised here is also reflective in his hobby list; he stated, "enjoying the outdoors, hunting, surfing and enjoying wonderful Worcester County!"



## 2014 40th Anniversary Spring Trade Show

Photos by John Dove, KRR Photography  
[www.krrphotography.com](http://www.krrphotography.com)



**CHECK OUT ALL THE PICTURES HERE!**

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