



December 2014

Hospitality Hotline

Connecting the industry through
Advocacy, Education and Partnerships

News from... THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Welcome New Members
The Art League of Ocean City

Halloween 2015

Frank Miller and Brenda Moore from the Town of OC Special Events joined our meeting to discuss further developing Halloween events. Currently, Bob Rothermel and Jack Hennen produce OCToberfest featuring the Beach Maze, Great Pumpkin Race and the Pet Parade. The idea is to expand these two weekends in October to offer visitors non-stop activity. Jolly Rogers and Trimpers are willing to open their Haunted Houses and the breezeway going up to the pier will be slated to offer Halloween themed games produced by local non-profits. A fantasy forest made the discussion as did a haunted boardwalk tram ride. Restaurants could feature pumpkin ale products and pairings, hotels can develop packages. The key is to collaborate and partner and to feature all Halloween events in one marketing package so visitors can make a weekend out of it. If you have any ideas or thoughts, please share with our office.

Dining Deals & New Years Eve

Winter is fast approaching and as everyone knows, things will be slow. Let's work together to showcase all the great dining deals and packages available to locals and visitors. We will have a Dining Deals and NYE banner on our DEALS page and are happy to feature your deals at no charge. Simply send your info to inquire@ocvisitor.com, fax 410-289-5645 or call at 410-289-6733.



ShoreCraftBeer.com Launched

In 1965, there was 1 microbrewery, today there are 3,040, with another 2,000 on the way. Locally, there are 17 in the immediate area. More than 5,400 jobs are in MD breweries. This industry continues to climb. Here is how you can generate some new business!

Create Hotel Packages

Include pint glasses from breweries, six-pack of beer, nuts, map of breweries to tour on own or package with a shuttle service. Here are a few sample names:

Toast Our Coast, Ale Trail, Paddle & Pints – combine w/ SUP outing, Sea Package – combine w/ oyster stout beer and gift card to a local raw bar, Brews Cruise, Girls Getaway – HOP & SHOP – combine brewery tastings, shopping & spa, Brewery & History Walking Tour on the Boardwalk, Look What's Brewing, Taps Tour - Behind the scene - discussion w/ Brewmasters – talk about how the hops are selected, Grapes & Grain Tour – breweries & wineries tour...the possibilities are endless.

Restaurant Ideas

Create beer pairing dinners, develop beer infused specials – onion rings, mustards, cakes & ice cream – get creative – maybe a "feel the burn" appetizer – beer paired with jalapenos, showcase beer flights to help guest pick favorite, blend spirits w/ local beer to create signature drink, create "Hoppy Hours"...

Brewers

Provide discount for bulk purchase of gift cards to include in packages – this will be new business for you.

Our Association has partnered with Ann Hillyer to promote ShoreCraftBeer.com. To find out how to be featured on this site, contact Ann Hillyer at 410-703-1970 or amh@maryland.com or visit shorecraftbeer.com. Additionally, your packages and events will be featured on our site, ToastOurCoast.com, simply send us your info to be listed today!



Tis the Season...for more fun in Ocean City!

For staff parties, holiday parties, hotel and convention groups, or just a fun time with friends, Lasertron is open year-round!

And we will open for your private group or party upon request.
Call Cathy at: #410-524-4386
or #410-430-2770

Lasertron is a great team builder and ice breaker for meetings and conferences!

- Located 3 blocks south from the Convention Center
- We are open every day, December 26th- January 5th, including New Years Eve and Day



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REST EASY: Lodging industry trends

TOP TRENDS FOR 2015: WILL YOUR HOTEL BE READY TO WELCOME THE SAVVY TRAVELER?

By: HMG Hotels

In an industry that revolves around customer service and satisfaction, hoteliers must constantly be aware of the changing attitudes and behaviors of their customers. Management that focuses on the most important trends in the industry will better understand what their guests want. Hotels that meet and exceed the expectations of their guests are always in high demand.

A valuable report, published a few years back by Deloitte, identifies those trends that continue today and will become even more pronounced in the future. The report that is entitled "Hospitality 2015: Game changers or spectators," covers five major points.

- Changing demographics • Market segmentation
- Technology • Staffing • Sustainability

Changing Demographics

According to the Deloitte Hospitality 2015 Report, by the year 2015, the Baby Boomer generation in the United States will control about 60 percent of the nation's wealth and account for about 40 percent of all spending. Those individuals, who are between age 45 and 65, represent the most important demographic for the hotel industry.

While each generation is important to the hotel industry, the biggest impact in 2015 will be by the Baby Boomer generation. Baby Boomers meet the three components that are most desirable for hotels.

- A large target audience • Money to be able to afford to travel • Time and desire to travel

Market Segmentation

Changing demographics and changing preferences of travelers will lead to further market segmentation in the coming years. Segmentation will influence innovation in product development, how properties and products are branded, sales strategies, and daily operations.

As Generation Y travelers get older, their travel habits will start to change. The same is true of Generation X, Baby Boomers, and Mature travelers. To attract more Mature travelers, hotels will have to offer this budget-conscious segment discounts, more value, and other enticements. Marketing to the Generation X and Generation Y crowd will mean using more social media and mobile applications. It will become increasingly more important to focus on both the leisure and business traveler.

According to a D.K. Shifflet and Associates report, 60 percent of domestic travel is for pleasure and 40 percent of domestic travel is for business. When leisure travelers book hotel rooms, 56 percent of the rooms are booked by adult couples. Of those adult couples, 38 percent are between ages 35-54 and 39 percent of hotel room bookings are for leisure travelers age 55 and older. From those statistics, you can infer that younger couples (under 35) account for only 23 percent of hotel rooms booked by couples.

The Report also noted that 67 percent of business travelers are male and of that 67 percent, 52 percent are between the ages of 32 and 54. While that is significant, hotels need to pay close attention to the female business traveler whose role in business is expanding. Trends are likely to show that more women will be traveling for business in the near future.

The Baby Boomer segment is the most dynamic of all segments. They say that 50 is the new 40 and that 60 is the new 50. People are living longer than ever before and are healthier and want to enjoy their lives when they retire. Particularly appealing to this market segment are

vacations that allow for learning and "off the beaten path" adventures.

Hotels can attract Baby Boomers with cooking classes, wine tasting tours, spa experiences and other things that are different from what they can get at home. Boomers who are in their 50's and 60's want to feel young and vibrant. While they may not be up for sky diving or repelling off of a mountain, scuba diving in the Florida Keys or hiking through Yellowstone National Park might be appealing to the older, but still active, generation.

Technology - Top tech hotel trends

Consumers and not hotels will continue to drive in-room technological advances. We have already seen such technology that allows guests to charge multiple electronic devices and check-out from their room, but that is only the beginning. As guests rely more and more on their smart phones, hotels must make it easier for guests to get what they want and need through simple apps.

Hotels will need to continue to invest in technology to help improve the guest experience, but they must also make smart investments. With limited budgets, hotels can not afford to try every new technology. They must upgrade to technologies that have been proven to add to revenues and reduce costs. It may be great to give every guest a remote control that opens the windows and closes the shades in their room, but that may not be justified if it does not bring in more revenue than it costs.

Staffing

No matter how much technology there is, a hotel can never replace the human touch. Robots may someday be able to do all of the housekeeping and kiosks may be able to provide all of the basic front desk services, but when guests come to a hotel, they still want human interaction.

It has been shown in study after study that long-term employees of hotels are a valuable asset. It takes time to become a seasoned hotel employee and understand how to provide the best guest services while also staying within the budgetary constraints of a hotel. You can not easily replace a ten-year employee with someone who has never worked in a hotel before.

Hotels will face the challenge of employee retention in the future. Hotel employees have historically been asked to work harder for less money than most other occupations. It is not unusual for the front desk clerk to also be the person that sets up the breakfast buffet, cleans the lobby, does the bookkeeping and also must greet every guest with a big smile. Housekeeping is often asked to clean three or four rooms per hour in an 8-hour day.

Sustainability

People are becoming ever-more conscientious about the environment and are showing a strong preference for supporting hotels and other businesses that are good corporate citizens. Sustainability is a trend that appeals to both the hotel guest and the management of a hotel. People are willing to cooperate and only have their sheets changed every two days or to participate in recycling programs. Hotel staff and management also want a cleaner and more sustainable environment.

On the business side, hotels can realize large cost savings by investing in energy-saving climate-control systems, using water more efficiently and building new properties that incorporate the sun and other natural elements to reduce energy usage.

READ ABOUT MORE TRENDS HERE.

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



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BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: *John Lewis*

John Lewis's roots began in Ocean City. In fact, his family has been in charter boat business at Talbot Street since the 1930's. His father, Lloyd Lewis, worked for the family in the 50's, and in the 70's purchased the Talbot Street pier from his family's estate. From there, John did what many young Ocean City boys did back in the day; he worked as a "dock boy" at the ripe age of 10 and was running boats by 19. He was in the first class at Worcester County School when it opened in 1970. After completing college, John leased and operated the White Marlin Marina for 16 seasons, as he continued to work with family in and around Talbot Street. In 1982, John helped drive the nails into the new outdoor gazebo bar, MR Ducks, which remains a staple with locals and visitors. In addition to helping with daily operations of Talbot Inn and M.R. Ducks, his duties include overseeing of Talbot Street Watersports - the Duckaneer Pirate Ship, Happy Hooker bay fishing, the Assateague Adventure, Explorer and the OC Rocket.. He and

his wife Kathleen have 2 kids, Alexandra who is in her second year of law school and John Jr. who is a senior at SU. In his spare time, John is an Easternshore boy at heart as he loves to fish and hunt.



THE DISH: *Restaurant industry trends*

By Kate Taylor

THE 10 BIGGEST RESTAURANT TRENDS FOR 2015

Food research firm Technomic has pinpointed 10 trends that its consultants and experts anticipate taking off in a big way next year. 2015 promises to continue some old trends, such as small plates, while bringing in some fresh concepts shaped not only by Generation Y, but also the teen digital natives of Generation Z.

1. Meals served with a side of bragging rights.

In 2015, customers can expect dinners out to increasingly become a "staged event that imparts bragging rights," according to Technomic. That means more meals created with Instagram and Twitter in mind, as restaurants realize the power of the customer in generating social media buzz in real time.

2. Go small or go home.

Tapas and dim sum have been on the tip of every foodie's tongue in recent years. Now, customers can expect other aspects of the menu to go small: menus are getting shorter, dining rooms are getting smaller and staff is being cut and replaced with new tech.

3. Traditional sit-down market shrinks.

The traditional fast food and fine dining industries are having a hard time measuring up to newer, alternative forms of foodservice. Fast casual is eating fast food's lunch, with customers preferring to spend their money at slightly higher quality chains like Chipotle, instead of fast-food classics like McDonald's. Then, there are fresh concepts like healthy vending, delivery services and innovative pop ups that all cut into the traditional restaurant market.

4. Beverage boom.

Restaurants are trying to make beverages a headlining act instead of a sideshow. With Starbucks premiering soft drink Fizzio and Coke increasing its share in Keurig, don't be surprised to see restaurants mixing up new beverages in both the alcoholic and non-alcoholic markets next year.

5. Asia ascendant.

In the past, when American customers think about "Asian food," it has been primarily Japanese sushi or Americanized Chinese food. In 2015,

look for Korean and Vietnamese food and upscale ramen to take over mainstream menus.

6. Bitter is better.

Customers are developing a taste for bitter flavors. That means deeper chocolates, hoppier beers and darker coffee, with Dunkin' Donuts and Tom Hortons premiering their first dark roasts this year.

7. Customers' (healthy) choice.

The rise of customers with personalized diets means that healthy eating is taking on many different, highly specific forms. With the plethora of dieting options, the best way to make restaurants work for customers whether they are following the paleo diet or eating only vegan is to display pick-and-choose options. Then, as nutrition buzzwords come and go, restaurants can stay current.

8. Locavores take over.

Everyone is going local – super local. The love for local food mean rising customer interest in "everything from house-purified water to regional seafood to locally manufactured products like beers and liquors." That's bad news for most chain restaurants, who struggle to convince customers that their products are as sustainable and environmentally friendly as independent competitors.

9. Highlighting the human factor.

With calls for sustainable chains of production and increased minimum wage, the spotlight is increasingly on the people behind the food. Expect these battles to continue in 2015, and for the outcomes to affect the menu.

10. Forget Millennials – it's time for Generation Z.

Companies are endlessly trying to appeal to Millennials, jockeying for the attention of the social media savvy generation. Soon, they'll have a new concern: grabbing the attention of Generation Z. As younger teens are finally beginning to make their own decisions about where they go out to eat, restaurants will have to start trying to appeal to a new kind of customer in 2015. That means high-tech service, louder music, moving visuals and heightened experiences.



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Welcome to Chris Pappenfort (formerly with Fresco's) as catering manager at **Princess Royale**.



Condolences

Our condolences to the **Phillips Restaurant** family on the passing of longtime employee, Sue Baker.

IMPORTANT! First Minimum wage increase January 1, 2015

Signed into law on Nov. 24, 2014, is the plan to have the minimum wage raised to \$10.10 by 2018. **Marylanders can expect to see the first increase to \$8 per hour on Jan. 1, 2015**, \$8.25 per hour in July 2015, \$8.75 per hour in July 2016, and \$9.25 per hour in July 2017. The final increase to \$10.10 is set for July, 2018. Montgomery and Prince George's counties were the only 2 Maryland Counties that approved a higher rate of \$11.50 by 2017. During these imposed raises, tipped workers will be at \$3.63 per hour. This 50 percent of the state's minimum wage, rather than the proposed 70 percent, could have resulted in more than \$7 per hour.

Ocean City Mayor's Prayer Breakfast

410-644-1300 fax 410-644-3646

Greetings:

This year's Ocean City Prayer Breakfast is scheduled for Friday, December 12, 2014. This will be our 25th and final event.

The Mayor's Prayer Breakfast is Friday, December 12, 2014, from 7:00- 9:15 a.m. at the Clarion Hotel and Conference Center, located on 101st Street in Ocean City, MD. Tickets for this event must be purchased in advance for \$16.00, at the following locations:

**Long and Foster Realty, 118th Street and Coastal Hwy, Ocean City
City Hall, 3rd Street and Baltimore Avenue, Ocean City
Ocean City Chamber of Commerce, Route 50, West Ocean City
Cropper Oil Company, Route 50, Berlin, MD.**

**Or by mail
204 Graham Avenue
Berlin, MD 21811**

There will be no tickets sold at the door! Please purchase your tickets by December 9th, so that we may give a count to the hotel management. Everyone is welcomed to attend. Bring a friend! You may reserve tables of eight to ten people at the time you purchase your tickets. Tables are first come first serve. I look forward to seeing everyone again this year. Thanks for your support. I'll see you there.

Sincerely,
Bruce Spangler, Director



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November Dinner Meeting



Margot Amelia, MD Office of Tourism, La Fabian Marshall & Cristina Pinteá, Marshall Hotels



Gary Leach, Centerplate, Chef Brent Creeger, Princess Royale, Dr. Trevor Jones, Wor-Wic Community College

Larry Noccolino, OC Convention Center, Marge Steele, Dunes Manor, Nancy Reither & Dick Smith, Quality Linen Service, James & Jennifer Bland, Mike's Carpet Connection, Joanne Hunsicker, OC Convention Center



Photos by KRR Photography

[Click here to see more!](#)



Congratulations to Greg Shockley, chair of the Maryland Tourism Development Board & owner of Shennanigans, who was awarded the Maryland Leadership Award by the Maryland Office of Tourism.

Senator Mathias, Hannah Byron, MD Office of Tourism, Greg Shockley, Margot Amelia, MD Office of Tourism

Winners of the Cooperative Marketing Partnership Award for the Wallops Island Project: Maryland Office of Tourism Development, Worcester County Tourism, StateVentures, LLC, Ocean City Hotel Motel & Restaurant Association, Ocean City Tourism, Ocean City Chamber of Commerce, Somerset County Office of Tourism, and Wicomico County Office of Tourism

