



May 2014

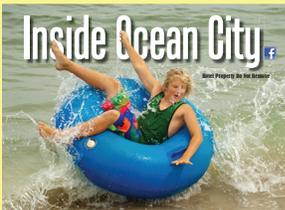
Hospitality Hotline

Connecting the industry through
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News from... THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Welcome New Members
Allied

La Hacienda - South Gate Ocean Pines
PMI Rentals - 126th Street Plaza - now
renting bikes too!
Watershed Installation Services LLC



2014 Inside Ocean City has arrived!

For the third year, our Association has partnered with Sandy Phillips to produce the official in-room hotel book. Inside Ocean City is in over 90% of all Ocean City hotel/motel rooms and exclusively in over half of those. This hard-bound book features the amazing photography of Kyle Hughes, Next Wave Studios. Everyone's support of this project is extremely appreciated as a portion of the proceeds do benefit our non-profit Association. If you haven't seen a copy, stop by our new office on 57th street today!

Habitat for Humanity Partnership

At our recent Board meeting, the Directors voted to partner with Worcester County Habitat for Humanity. The goal is to enlist our membership to find and qualify hospitality families who need assistance. After all, the hospitality community is the driving force of employment. More information will be forthcoming on the Hoedown for Habitat as well as other ways in which we can all come together for the cause!



2014-2015 OCHMRA Board of Directors

On Thursday, April 24th, Tourism Director, Donna Abbott installed the 2014-2015 Officers and Board of Directors of the Ocean City Hotel-Motel-Restaurant Association at Harrison's Harbor Watch. Approximately 250 members gathered for this annual ceremony. G. Hale Harrison, of Harrison Group, was installed as the new President, Bob Torrey, of Happy Jack Pancake House, was installed as 1st Vice President and Mark Elman, of the Clarion Fontainebleau Hotel, will serve as the 2nd Vice President. Shawn Harman, of Fishtales/Bahia Marina, continues as Secretary -Treasurer. The three-year Board of Directors installed include, Doug Buxbaum of Buxy's Salty Dog, Caryl Cardenas of Park Place Hotel and Dave Robinson of Boardwalk Hotel Group. Two-year Directors include Patrick Staib of Real Hospitality Group, Gary Figgs of Seacrets and Tom Tawney of Cayman Suites. One-year Directors are Austin Purnell of OC Motels, Will Lynch of the Commander Hotel and Rebecca Taylor of Captain's Table. Outgoing President, Chris Trimper was presented with a plaque in appreciation of his hard work and dedication as HMRA President. The new Board will have their first meeting on May 8th. The evening's festivities also featured other award presentations as well as the Bank of Ocean City Tres Lynch Scholarship. Worcester Green awards were presented by Worcester County Tourism Director Lisa Challenger, along with Commissioner Louise Gulyas. And, Chef Gary Leach presented the awards for the recent Delmarva Chefs and Cooks Association oyster competition.



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THE DISH: Restaurant industry trends

Go to TheRestaurantExpert.com

5 EASY MENU CHANGES TO MAKE MORE MONEY

By David Scott Peters

As you look for ways to make more money in your restaurant, there are many tools you can use to influence purchasing behavior of customers in your restaurant.

Here are 5 easy things you can do to your menu today to increase profitability:

1 Place high-profit items where your customers are most likely to look first on your menu. There have been studies that show where a customer looks first and then the path they take with their eyes. These studies show eye movement for a one, two and three panel menu.

2 Don't let your menu be a price list. Price list menus have an item name and then to the far right it lists the price all by itself. Stick that price at the end of the item description without a dollar sign and in a smaller font size. Let your guests read the description and want the item first, rather than shop the price they want to pay and then pick the food they will order.

3 If you have categories, such as appetizers, that have 10 items or more in them, understand that the first, second and last items will sell the most in that category. So place your priority (i.e., most profitable) items in these spots to move them and make the most money.

4 Make an item stand out with a box, highlight, star or picture. These items will sell. If you include photos of specific menu items, be prepared to sell a lot of these options. And make sure you profile high-priced, high-profit items since they are most likely to be ordered!

5 Reduce the overall number of items you have on your menu. Fewer menu items mean less money in inventory sitting on your shelves, less waste, less labor and overall more consistent food. Having too much on your menu can cost you a lot of money.

Take any or all of these actions and you will see results like lowered food costs and increased sales. Heck, maybe you'll experience both!

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BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: *Caryl Cardenas*

Ocean City native, Caryl Cardenas, General Manager of Park Place hotel, has a long history in Hospitality. Leaving Ocean City to attend Cornell University School of Hotel Administration, she returned to start her first job as Reservations Manager for the Plim Plaza hotel in 1984. She then joined the team at the Sheraton Corporation, taking part in the Management Training Program, and then continuing to work in their Systems and Accounting Department. Caryl decided to move back to Ocean City in 1998, opening Blue Water Grill with her husband, Hugo. She and her family then decided to open the Park Place Hotel, and Caryl has run the hotel since its opening. She has two children, Elyssia, Cornell University School of Hotel Administration graduate, and a son, who is a freshman at Cornell in the School of Hospitality Administration. "Hopefully they will eventually return to Ocean City and carry on the family tradition" says Caryl.

Welcome to **Carlene Boyer**, the new Marketing Coordinator at Seacrets. Congratulations to **Matt Rankin**, Restaurant Manager, and **Angel Luckel**, Retail Manager both at Ocean City Brewing Company. Congratulations to **Adam Showell, Jr**, Castle in the Sand, on his wedding to **Leticia Holquin**. Another congratulations to **Zachary Newton** who is now at APPI. Also, welcome to **Lauren Kurz**, Marketing & Event Coordinator at Harpoon Hanna's and **Caitlyn Twilley**, marketing at Fronteir Town.



REST EASY: *Lodging industry trends*

Surprise! 10 ways your hotel website is killing your business. By: *Dave Spector*

FULL ARTICLE HERE →

Would you buy three-year-old TVs for your rooms?

How about cheap lobby furniture that no one wanted to sit on?

If 1,000 people came into your store and 999 walked out without buying anything, would you rethink your merchandising?

The answers to these questions are obvious. But as strange as it may seem, some hoteliers remain blissfully unaware of their website's negative impact on revenue.

And it's a big problem: depending on the targeted ratio of group vs leisure bookings, the typical independent or boutique hotel website could represent more than 50% of the property's expected revenue production.

Yet, far too many hoteliers still serve up an inferior, antiquated experience to potential and repeat guests. Remember, virtually ALL of your website traffic INTENDS (they rarely stumble into it) to find your site through natural search, paid search or links from other related sites. Then, 99%+ of those highly relevant visitors leave without converting... what does this tell you about your hotel's website as a vital business asset?

Think your website is "good enough?" Think again... Here's a quick list of ten ways your hotel website may be insufficient and underperforming:

1. You treat every website visitor the same
2. You treat every booking engine visitor the same
3. You've never actually watched a human test it.
4. Your pricing is confusing
5. You have no SEO foundation
6. You fail to showcase your special promos
7. Your photography is boring
8. You fail to delight meeting/event planners
9. You are not optimized for all devices
10. You are overspending on traffic until you fix conversions

Improving your website 'look-to-book' conversion rate should be at the very top of every hotel marketer's list in 2014.

Your website is the first impression guests have of your property, it will shape their perception of your value and determine if they will buy from you, surf away to your competition or book your property through a costly OTA.



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Photos by John Dove, KRR Photography
www.krrphotography.com

April Dinner Meeting

See all the pictures from
the April Dinner Meeting
by clicking [here!](#)

Jeanne Blanchard &
Bill Salvatore, Eden Roc Motel



Annette Kenney, Wor Wic
Community College, was the
recipient of the John "Tres" Lynch, III
Memorial Scholarship presented by
Will Lynch, Commander Hotel and
Earl Conley, Bank of Ocean City



Terri Mays, Washington Post Media, Matt Lyle,
AAA, Cheryl Wood, Washington Post Media



Rose Brous, Flamingo Motel &
Linda Lynch, Commander Hotel