

TeleGRAM

Great American Hotel Group Newsletter

Around the Block

Wishing a "Happy Anniversary" to our Great American Hotel Group office and property GMs:

Jason Rickett- 1 year

A Little Bit Wiser

Wishing a "Happy Birthday" to our Great American Hotel Group office and property GMs:

Adam Robitaille - August 2

Dave Akridge - August 14

Jerry Ianella - September 14

Sheri Kresky - September 20

Gabrielle Smith - September 24

Celebration Station

In case you want to celebrate, here is a list of National and "other" holidays: Ice Cream Sandwich Day (8/2), Lighthouse Day (8/7), Relaxation Day (8/14), Dog Appreciation Day (8/26), Labor Day (9/2), Cheese Pizza Day (9/5), Teddy Bear Day (9/9) and Love Note Day (9/26). Remember salesmanship means being unique and standing out from the crowd. Some of these "days" will allow you to get your customer's attention in a positive and unique manner.

Food For Thought



"No work is insignificant. All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence."

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

MAINTAIN BALANCE.

Use Sales and Marketing Skills wisely!

Are You Selling? Or, Are You Marketing?

By Linda Komornik, Corporate Director of Sales & Marketing

There is often confusion as to whether a property salesperson is actually selling or whether they are just wandering around the community marketing their hotel and hoping a sales contract drops in their laps. In order to try to specifically define the difference, I called on my old friend Wikipedia to help me with the definition: *Sales: "Activity of selling, or the number of goods or services sold in a given time period."* *Marketing: "The study and management of exchange relationships. Marketing is used to create, keep and satisfy the customer."*

Our hotel Sales Managers are primarily responsible for finding customers appropriate to our hotel facilities and converting lookers into bookers. Being able to sort through leads, prospects, and data to find people to talk to about our product takes skill. Learning how to find a customer is more than half the battle.

Sales Managers must understand the steps of sales in order to fulfill their goals. Getting to know your potential customer, walking the fine line between developing a business relationship and "getting in their business", and being able to listen to what the customer wants before asking for the sale is critical.

Sales Managers in our hotels are responsible for all aspects of booking group business, soliciting and signing Local Negotiated accounts, and working with the brand to court and convince national accounts to book at our hotels. While Sales Managers are not primarily responsible for finding and booking transient guests, it is important that they participate in revenue management strategies and decisions so that they are looking for the right group/volume/LNR business, at the right times, and at the right rates. Having all these tools in their toolboxes will give them the advantage over the competition.

So when do we use Marketing to make sales work? After all, the definition above says marketing is used to create, keep and satisfy the customer!

A good Sales Manager has a few marketing skills up their sleeve at all times. Developing marketing materials and collateral, creating packages and promotions to support specific sales efforts, and being creative are great skills for every sales manager. Marketing can be learned. Sales must be in your blood! Knowing when to switch lanes between sales and marketing is critical!

So, what do you do if you are more Sales or more Marketing? You focus on learning what you need to improve in both categories. Salespeople who want to be more creative: talk to people, brainstorm, reach out to people you know who are creative and learn to think outside-the-box. Creative types: You need to become more grounded and focused on the details and learning the skills needed to convert lookers into bookers. Set up your own personal learning plan. Take courses, read, and work with those who have strengths where you do not.

The Grand Dame Is Looking Great for 132 Years Old

The Atlantic House Inn, located in historic York Beach, ME celebrated its 132nd birthday last month with fresh coats of interior and exterior paint and a proud new flag. Interesting new shops, a restaurant with a piano bar, and fourteen luxurious condos make this the perfect seaside retreat for families of all ages.

Opening in 1887, the Atlantic House Inn is just steps away from the famous Short Sands Beach and overlooks the quaint town center. GRAM has managed AHI since 2013 following the complete renovation of the residences. There is much history to the area and families come back generation after generation to relive memories and make fresh ones.

AHI is open seasonally May 1 thru the end of October annually.



Each condo is modern with full kitchens and washer/dryer. Most bathrooms feature soaker tubs and rain head showers. The decor of each unit is slightly different but each one pays homage to New England cottage decor with overstuffed furniture, quilts and pillows, and touches of seaside kitsch. Choose from our 2 story loft unit, 1 bedroom units, or individual hotel rooms. Some units have balconies, some views of the ocean, but every unit is guaranteed to be cozy and comfortable.

Pictures from top to bottom, left to right: Atlantic House in 1905. Atlantic House Inn 2019, Sand Bar and Grill, view from Atlantic House Inn balcony into the town center, panorama of Short Sands Beach, and sitting area of our 2 story loft unit.

I Am Human, I Am A Resource *Suzanne Baele, Corporate Director of Human Resources*

Protecting our Greatest Assets - YOU!

Republished from AHLA website.

Building on decades of investments in safety and security and in coordination with security experts, the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) and the major hotel brands have announced the 5-Star Promise, a pledge to provide hotel employees across the U.S. with employee safety devices (ESDs) and commit to enhanced policies, trainings and resources that together are aimed at enhancing hotel safety, including preventing and responding to sexual harassment and assault.

In an unprecedented show of unity within a fiercely competitive industry, the CEOs of Hilton, Hyatt, IHG, Marriott and Wyndham joined AHLA president and CEO Katherine Lugar and Chairman of the Board Mark Carrier, president of B.F. Saul Company Hospitality Group, for the announcement.

Deployment of ESDs is already underway. Hotel companies in several markets, including New York, Washington D.C., Chicago and Seattle, already provide ESDs to employees, and they are piloting devices in many other markets. This announcement broadens this commitment to hotels across the country, with the goal of broad implementation by 2020.

"We're proud of the hotel industry's efforts and are encouraged to see our industry come together in an unprecedented way to make our employees feel safer at work. Hotels have been investing in employee and guest safety for decades, working with experts to continuously update protocols and procedures that keep both employees and guests safe," said Katherine Lugar, president and CEO of AHLA.

"Safety is a never-ending challenge, and the hotel industry is highly committed to be part of the solution. Protecting our employees—as well the millions of guests who stay in American hotel rooms each day—is critically important to our industry. Unfortunately, no industry is immune to dealing with sexual harassment, but we will continue to work, day in and day out so America's hotels are secure places for all those who work in and visit them."

Participating brands or properties will determine the best security devices based on the property's layout and features, with a range of options including devices with loud noise-emitting features or emergency GPS tracking at the push of a handheld button. AHLA has convened a sourcing task force to assist companies in identifying the appropriate technology for their respective properties.

"As an industry, it's important that we continue to lead around these important issues affecting our employees, building on our longstanding commitment to the hospitality culture and industry," said Mark Carrier. "We are proud that AHLA members are working together on solutions no one company could address alone, and we hope AHLA's actions will be a catalyst for other industries to follow suit."

For more detailed information, contact your brand or the AHLA at www.AHLA.com.

hr corner

New Hot Line Phone Number guarantees total anonymity!

All complaints of harassment must be taken seriously and communicated to Suzanne Baele, Corporate Director of Human Resources at 603-828-4212.

GRAM has also launched a few new policies for associates. These new policies include Weapons and Violence in the Workplace and Conflicts of Interest. Please contact Suzanne for more information.

TeleGRAM Staff

Editor/Corporate Sales & Marketing

Linda.Komornik@GreatAmericanHG.com

Contributing Writers:

President

Dave.Akridge@GreatAmericanHG.com

Corporate Human Resources

Suzanne.Baele@GreatAmericanHG.com

Corporate Controller

Gabrielle.Smith@GreatAmericanHG.com

Regional Directors of Operations

Rob.Greene@GreatAmericanHG.com

Labor Day Trivia

Labor Day honors the American labor movement and the contributions that workers have made to the strength, prosperity, laws, and well-being of the country.

Labor Day called the "unofficial end of summer" because it marks the end of the cultural summer season.

In fashion, Labor Day is considered the last day it is acceptable to wear white shoes or seersucker.

Labor Day is considered one of the largest sale dates of the year, second only to the Christmas season's Black Friday. It is particularly known for back-to-school sales on supplies and clothing. Many states hold "tax free" shopping sales.

#NationalSelfieDay Fun - June 26th

Hotels around the portfolio spent quality time interacting with our guests and colleagues. This was a great time to showcase your property's Instagram and social media by offering opportunities to get to know your staff and your guests. Here are some of the great posts from our hotels and GRAM offices! Mark your calendar for the next opportunity to showcase your staff and guests.



Top Row (from left to right): Great American Hotel Group Dover Office; Courtyard Queens/Fresh Meadows, NY, Great American Hotel Group Satellite Sales Office.
Bottom Row (from left to right): Fairfield Millville/Vineland, NJ, SpringHill Quakertown, PA, and Fairfield Queens/Fresh Meadows, NY.

Dog Days of Summer

The Oscar Meyer Weiner Mobile is making the rounds. This unique and eye-catching vehicle made appearances at the Fairfield Millville, NJ (pictured with our staff) and at the Homewood Suites Gateway Hills in Nashua, NH.



Petigara Takes The Helm at APF

Access Point Financial LLC (APF) has appointed Dilip Petigara as CEO. His appointment was made as part of aggressive new corporate growth initiatives put in place to meet the growing demand for financial services in the global hotel sector.

Since joining Access Point Financial in 2012, Petigara has held the position of COO for the company. With more than 23 years of experience in the hospitality and finance industries, he previously served as SVP of Specialty Finance Group, where he managed loan operations, internal credit approvals, closing/funding and asset management. Prior to that, he held the position of assistant VP and senior underwriter at GMAC Commercial Mortgage. Congratulations Dilip!



Selling the Sizzle *Linda Komornik, Corporate Director of Sales & Marketing*

Everyone wants to have their day in the spotlight and some of our hotels have been approached about allowing film and television crews to use our facilities for location shoots. While it seems like a great deal of fun and some free marketing - please keep in mind that you need to do your homework before you say yes or no. The Property needs to take certain steps to protect the Property's and the Company's interests.

First and foremost - you need to make sure the film or show is appropriate for all audiences. Ask for a copy of the producer's script to verify the film's content. Illegal activities, questionable nature of content, endorsement of a product, company or service, and pornography are definite no no's. You also never want to be involved with a production that puts our industry and product in a bad light or would subject guests or associates to ridicule or embarrassment. Contact your brand film and entertainment office, or call Great American Hotel Group to discuss the process before you make any commitments.

A contract specific to this type of production must be signed and it must release the hotel from liability, indemnify the property from claims by third parties, provide evidence of insurance coverage, gives release and permission to photograph brand names (or not), reimburse property for any room rebate or other financial loss due to guest complaints, reimburse the property for any expenses incurred, restore property back to original condition, and secure appropriate releases from guests or associates filmed.



On another note, it is also summertime and requests for hotel pool parties are on the upswing. This is not a practice that our properties should consider. While it might seem harmless, should an accident occur, our property insurance only protects guests staying in a guest room at approved occupancy limits. A parent might think they can rent one guest room so as to host a birthday party for their child and 20 of his/her closest friends, but our insurance coverage would not be liable for anyone other than the occupants of the guest room should an accident happen. You do not want this risk!

This also goes for meeting room rentals. If a guests plans to have a party in your meeting or banquet room, they do not have privileges to use other hotel amenities such as the pool.

So how do you tell a guest no? Be prepared and jot down your responses on your "If this, then that" cheat sheet (remember my blog on this topic?). You should also have the local/state/federal statutes for innkeepers available to let the guest know that you aren't trying to be a meanie - just protecting them and yourself from any liability. Contact or research this information on the AHLA website. Of course, you will always get the guest who will say "nothing will happen and if it does I'll assume the liability." Remember, when the chips fall, this will not stand up in court and the hotel will be liable. Again, if you are unsure as how to handle these types of requests, call on me and I'd be happy to help you with your responses.



Happy Reaching for the Stars and Keeping Cool!

Linda

The Motivation to Sell



"It's not your customer's job to remember you, it is your obligation and responsibility to make sure they don't have the chance to forget you." ~ Patricia Fripp

"Make every interaction count, even the small ones. They are all relevant." ~ Shep Hykan

"Building a good customer experience does not happen by accident. It happens by design." ~ Clare Muscutt

Roomer Has It

HOMEWOOD SUITES GATEWAY HILLS

Congratulations to Sales Manager Trish Elliott on the arrival of her son Michael James, born June 8th, at 9:16 pm, weighing in at 8 lbs. 4 oz. and 21" long. Baby MJ and Trish, as well as her husband and big sis Victoria, are all doing well.



FAIRFIELD AND COURTYARD FRESH MEADOWS/QUEENS, NY

June 6th marked the one year birthday for our two hotels in Fresh Meadows. Pictured here are members of the management staff, Alexa Silver (AGM), Joe Slane (DOS), Ali Cheema (CY FOM), Mustafa Naseer (FF FOM), Jon Kozma (GM), and Brian Stokes (DO).



The staff celebrated with in house guests by hosting a BBQ for all and presented each staff member with a fun certificate of excellence.



"Pleasure in the job puts perfection in the work."

~ Aristotle



Operationally Speaking Rob Greene, Regional Director of Operations

Hurricane season is officially on us. Make sure your hotel's disaster plan (and your personal family plan) is in place and that all your supplies are packed up and available. If you have not already checked your boxes, please take time to do this today!

ARE YOU PREPARED?

IMPORTANT TIPS TO KNOW BEFORE A DISASTER STRIKES



MAKE AN EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION PLAN: WHERE TO GO, WHAT TO DO, HOW TO RECONNECT

MAKE SURE YOU KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY'S EVACUATION PLAN AND EVACUATION ROUTES



COLLECT AND SAFEGUARD CRITICAL FINANCIAL, MEDICAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND LEGAL DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS

PACK AN EMERGENCY KIT, INCLUDING ITEMS SUCH AS WATER, FOOD, FLASHLIGHTS, MEDICATIONS, AND CELLPHONE CHARGERS



KNOW WHERE YOUR GAS SHUTOFF VALVE AND ELECTRICAL SHUTOFF ARE LOCATED

PROTECT YOUR PETS BY MAKING AN EMERGENCY PLAN AND KIT FOR THEM



Welcome Baymont Groton/Mystic

We are pleased to welcome the newest member of the Great American Hotel Group family! On Monday, August 5th, the Baymont by Wyndham Groton/Mystic will be added to the GRAM portfolio of hotels. Our takeover team will arrive at the hotel this Sunday and begin setting up systems and procedures.

Originally opened in 1984, the hotel features 140 guest rooms, banquet and meeting facilities, complimentary breakfast buffet, on site restaurant, indoor pool and hot tub, fitness room, and business center. Each guest room features free WiFi, flat screen HDTV with cable, mini-refrigerators, microwaves and coffeemakers.



Located just minutes from the Naval Submarine Base New London and the US Coast Guard Academy, the hotel also welcomes visitors interested in the historic USS Nautilus and the Submarine Force Library & Museum. Amenities at the hotel also include free casino shuttle to both Mohegan Sun and Foxwoods.