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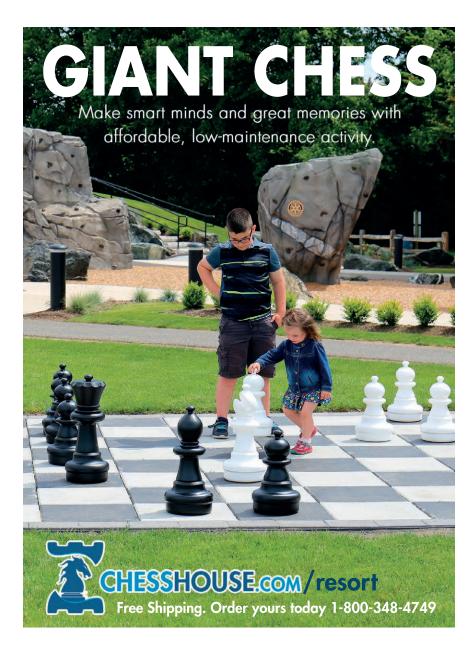
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### **Timeshares Make For Safer Vacations**

By Sharon Scott Wilson, RRP

COVID has most probably altered the vacation article, "How to market today's uncertainty to patterns of Americans for the next few years, possibly for a decade, especially for couples and families. With so many of us working from home and many others not working at all, the extended weekend getaway is quite possibly a thing of the past – or at least for the present.

Until recently, resort marketers had pinned their hopes on the nascent pool of millennials as potential buyers. But in his article in the June 5, 2020 edition of The Washington Post, "The unluckiest generation in U.S. history," Andrew Van Dam observes, "After accounting for the present crisis, the average millennial has experienced slower economic growth since entering the workforce than any other generation in U.S. history.

### Tragic news, indeed

Given gloomy reports such as these, leaders in the resort industry have historically risen to the challenge. They survived and managed to profit through the 2008 financial recession, for instance. And, prior to that, they overcame the serious challenges presented during the savings and loan crisis of the late '80s and early '90s.

Unquestionably, the Coronavirus has dealt us all a sound and serious blow. If there's any silver lining to be found for those involved in the marketing, selling, and management of vacation ownership/timeshare resorts after the grim scythe continues its assault, it's that families deeply need vacations at this time and the safest way to take them is to spend a week or two in an RV or a timeshare condo.

he extended weekend getaway is quite possibly a thing of the past or at least for the present.

### Is there, indeed, a silver lining?

Our industry offers respite to our owners/ members. They own a gosh-darned vacation! Our job is to make it more attractive than ever for them to use it. And for those families who have not yet discovered the value of vacation ownership, we need to continue our marketing efforts - perhaps with a little different message this time and by updating our toolkit.

David Stroeve's article in the October edition of Resort Trades addresses the situation. The

your advantage," offers some good advice on doing just that. "At some point, you must jump in and get your hands dirty but test everything you do," he says. We need to make a plan, execute it, measure results, and keep tweaking that plan.

No matter what your role in the resort industry, it pays to have an interest and knowledge of marketing to fit the current situation. Whether your resort has a sales line, performs mainly in-house sales, or relies on a management company to assist in selling HOA-owned inventory, anyone involved in operating a resort today would be wise to study marketing in today's environment.

### Jumping In

"Having a planned approach and path is important," Stroeve continues. We've all heard the age-old comparison between the "ready, fire, aim" and the "ready, aim, fire" approach to marketing. Putting a plan together and, equally importantly, implementing it, requires leadership. Whether this happens in the form of a team or a group, or just a single leader, the basic tenets are the same: Leaders begin with the end in mind.

Scott Bahr also joined in during in his remarks during his Trades Lunch Bunch webinar, "Leadership: What Does It Take?", held on October 9th. As you can read in Georgi Bohrod Gordon's article in the October 2020 edition of Resort Tardes magazine: "At the top of this list [of requirements for leadership] is a vision. The vision sets the tone and the goals that fit your product and/or service. The right data informs your decisions, giving you the insights, you need regarding your customers, the industry, and your operations, allowing you to execute with precision and deliver consistently superior results. And finally, you must have a clear voice, both internally to your team and globally with your customers.

You'll notice Scott's description of leadership circles back to the people involved. "The key is to understand what your team and your customers need in the current social, economic, and political environment. Focusing on the positive and innovating concrete solutions makes abundant sense. More importantly constant communication, in fact, over-communication, will position you and your brand as thought leaders who genuinely care about their stakeholders."



#### Timeshares make for safer vacations

...Which brings us back to our owners/ members and prospects: people need vacations. We need vacations to bring down cortisol levels: we need a time and the space to reconnect with loved ones; we need them to help us focus on self – on our own mental, emotional, and physical health.

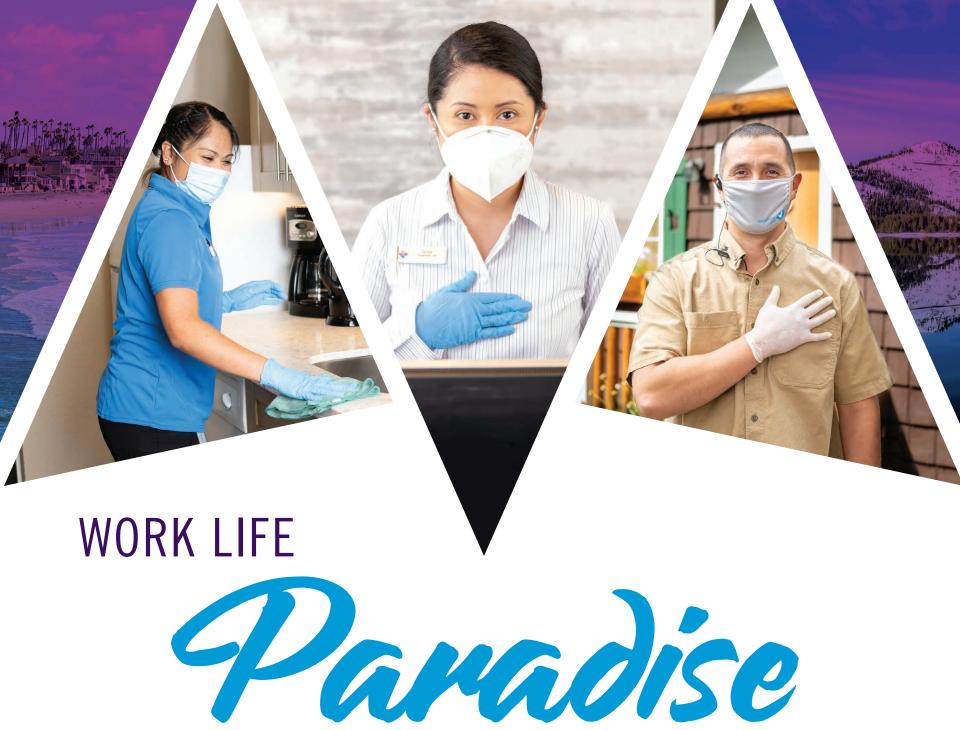
And what, again, could answer all of these needs and be safer than a week in a timeshare unit? No worries about taking the group out to wait in line for Red Lobster... no pizza on a bed. Choose to pop in the pool when it's least crowded; whack away at miniature golf (or real golf) out in the fresh air; long walks along the beach or through the historical district...resorts typically offer plenty of access to outdoor activities.

Perhaps this may sound a little Pollyannish, but I'm proud of our industry for being so customer-oriented. Yes, there are some buyers who get in over their heads and must deal with collectors; and yes, those evening robocalls are actually VERY annoying. (Hello, Resort-Company-Who-May-Not-Be-Named! You know who you are.)

But the facts are these: Our beautiful, luxurious resorts would not be here if they didn't have a solid revenue stream and the promise of reward for the developers. Shared ownership with an underlying real estate interest is a secure way to assure them of this. Ultimately, a large group of people assume the debt together. Hopefully they vote for reasonably wise HOA board members who will adequately fund reserves and will approve assessments that properly maintain the property. Hopefully, your homeowner association has the vision and wherewithal to preserve the project, plus pride of ownership to avoid the dreaded label, "legacy." (Take a look at the Cove at Yarmouth for inspiration.)

Anyway, this is the ideal: Given the right leaders and a team with the long-term objective of preserving a valuable asset, your resort will provide an enhanced standard of living to owners/members for many years to come. So, take a moment to be proud to provide your customers with a necessary and valuable ingredient in their life-long pursuit of health and happiness!

Sharon Scott Wilson, RRP, is publisher of Resort Trades, Resort Trades Weekly and host of The Trades' virtual events (see ResortTrades.com/LearningCenter). Subscribe to Resort Trades Weekly -https://resorttrades.com/resortnation.



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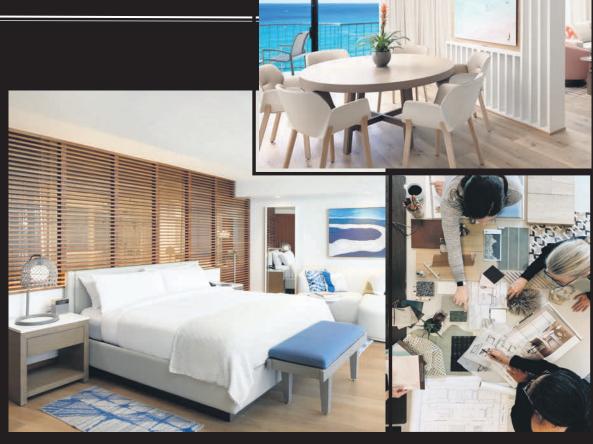
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# Bringing Technology Home – Benefits, Balance and the Bottom Line

by Wendy Poe

As resorts and businesses create their "postpandemic" organizations, IT departments find themselves at the epicenter of operational strategy and decision-making. I recently had the pleasure of catching up with Suzzi Morrison, an accomplished IT consultant, former CTO for



Suzzi Morrison, President, S3A, Inc.

Nordis Technologies and renowned Vacation Ownership systems expert. Suzzi blends practical technology advice with visionary wisdom of how she sees companies evolving postpandemic. Register now to

get her advice live on November 6th at 1 PM EST as Resort Trade's Lunch Bunch speaker.

While most companies had the technology and capabilities pre-COVID to equip associates to work from home (WFH), only a handful of industry leaders were comfortable with employees working remotely. Thus, when statewide health crisis lockdowns went into effect last March, IT departments had to pivot overnight and work 24/7 to send service and corporate teams home with laptops or PC's configured with the virtual tools (VPN networks, Cloud Support and Software Licenses) to successfully support their roles. The shift also necessitated a new level of cyber-security to protect both customer and employee data and determine how to best support a decentralized workforce. All of a sudden, the IT department became everyone's best friend with a critical seat at the table for executive decision-making and future organizational structure.

#### **Best Ways To Secure Your Data**

To ensure data integrity, companies big and small need to be vigilant with how they manage this new uncertain era. Suzzi recommends the following:

- Issue company-restricted hardware that is locked down and encrypted.
- Don't allow users to add personal software or apps which could contain a virus or be counterproductive to other business applications.
- Continually run scheduled anti-virus scans no matter what platform you are using.
- Ensure all remote hardware is updated regularly.
- Use a product like Ring Central or other cloud based PBX system then possible.
- Make sure your teams are using passwordprotected meetings when using video technologies like Zoom or Go-To-Meeting.
- Consider issuing company cell phones to associates so they can plug directly into their computer to make and receive calls as if they are in the office connected to your cloud PBX-system. This gives reporting capability and functionality that will create a more seamless experience and teleconferencing with clear connections.

### **Recommendations for Password Security**

Password maintenance is more critical than ever to protect your employee and customer data. Not a week goes by that we don't hear of major corporations battling security breaches when their systems are hacked by unscrupulous characters. Consider implementing "pass phrases" versus "passwords". A pass phrase leverages something personal to you and works like this:

- You have a dog, Barney, who loves to swim.
- In pass phrase language, this would be: Barneyloves2\$wim
- Require upper case, lower case and special characters.
- Don't allow the same pass phrase to be used again until the associate has utilized others at least 5 times.

Speaking of hacking, what else can you do to avoid being hacked or personally have your identity stolen?

- Use dual-authentication wherever possible
- Update your passwords every 90 days on all accounts

- For ecommerce sites, consider setting a "not to exceed" limit so company will reach out if something is ordered above that
- Monitor accounts frequently using a tool like LifeLock to protect yourself against improper use of personal information and the newest craze, medical insurance scams where perpetrators use your account to make false claims to get money back from medical provider.



### **Cost-Saving Strategies To Save Money Today**

Everything in today's pandemic era is negotiable. Cable, phone and cellular providers, along with video networking, webinar platforms, contractors and cloud storage suppliers – are all making deals to maintain market share. Compile a list of your vendors - technology and otherwise - and regularly reach out to them to learn of any new specials or opportunities to renegotiate your ongoing fees. For home-schooling families, look deeper at your internet service for maximum speed and device support to make your time at home digital-friendly.



### Ideas for Health-Safe Office Redesign and Innovative Scheduling

As corporate support staff and behind-thescenes teams return to the office, companies are challenged with how to provide a safe yet productive environment. Office space and



staffing schedules will change dramatically -- some positions will be permanently "retired" based on new revenue levels and others (like IT support roles) will expand. Even departments like accounting, collections and HR are now candidates for working from home as companies amp-up their cybersecurity precautions.

Some companies are downsizing and moving corporate facilities, others are redesigning interior spaces to be more open but shared. Morrison estimates that for the foreseeable future, up to 50% of staffing could remain remote.

The new space may be designed so that everyone can spread out more - in some cases having a designated workspace in one location and the ability to store personal effects in another. Break rooms and common areas have to be completely rethought.

Other companies are using staffing schedules to rotate associates into the office whereby 50% of folks will be working in office on Monday, Wednesday and Friday with the others on Tuesday and Thursday. Whatever the solution, everyone is thinking creatively about how to "do more with less" and be sensitive to the needs and preference of their workforce.

### **How IT Can Help Improve Customer & Associate Experience**

As they say, necessity is the mother of all invention! Morrison sees many resorts and industry firms accelerating their technology investments based on business challenges caused by the pandemic. From the expected advancements with remote notary services to speed-up the title closing process to the more bleeding-edge use of VR (Virtual Reality) technology for sales teams to replicate an on-site experience, timesharing is getting more innovative AND efficient.

Picture being able to tour a resort renovation or new property (for rental or purchase) from the comfort of your living room, smelling the cinnamon rolls baking in your villa oven while swaying to the Caribbean dancers inviting you "home". The mission is to



make it easy and appealing to own vacation products, using technology to get people on vacation as soon as possible and enjoy time away together.

In the not-so-distant past, IT departments primarily supported more dominant sales and marketing organizations. Today, Morrison is seeing IT leaders being called upon as true executive partners to help solve companywide complex problems. Because IT has an intimate understanding of the innerworkings of end-to-end business processes, they are a natural source for ideas to automate or improve operational efficiency. To continually improve your business and customer / employee experiences, engage them early and often to take advantage of their breadth of knowledge and solutions.

Wendy Poe is a Customer Experience executive and recognized timeshare industry expert, honored to have led some of the most celebrated Marketing, Brand Communications & Customer Success teams in America.





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### The Lunch Bunch

November 6, 1:00 p.m. ET, Suzzi (Allbrycht) Morrison, President, S3A, Inc., presents "Bringing Technology Home - Benefits, Balance and the Bottom Line."



Visit ResortTrades.com/LearningCenter to register, view videos of past events, and learn more about upcoming events.

### Joe Nahman, an Uncommon Executive

by John Locher, RRP



Like the island location of Hilton Head itself, Joe Nahman and the companies he leads, RMC Resort Management, Epic Vacations, Resort Source, and Hilton Head Accommodations are shining examples of adaptation, innovation and the importance of long-term focus on creating memorable vacation experiences. Both Nahman and his companies are independent with multiple resources, natural flair, and a variety of experiences that blend the embodiment of a great vacation destination with well-run vacation ownership resorts. RMC Resort Management provides owner-centric management services to six resorts, and sales and marketing to nine resorts in this region of South Carolina referred to as the

Low Country. Nahman is the uncommon executive in vacation ownership. He has worked in one-destination, serving many of the same resort owners for over 30 years. We wanted to know how his companies have managed to flourish for so long, even throughout challenging times.

#### Independence Allows Flexibility

"Our independence allows ultimate flexibility. We have created collaborative partnerships with our resort clients. We listen to our owners and continually adapt our style, focus and product offerings to meet their needs," says Joe Nahman, who has thrived by working hand in hand with his association board members. "We're committed to providing personal service and understanding the changing needs of our owners. This requires proactive, out of the box thinking and an agile mindset. Homeowners association board members are amazing. I continue to be in awe of the passion and dedication board members have for their vacation resorts. Over the course of my career, I have been fortunate to learn from some incredibly talented board members. The people who volunteer to run their resorts come from a wide variety of backgrounds, have all enjoyed great success, and are eager to share their knowledge and expertise."

### **Hands on Management**

Explain how you provide your clients with the highest possible level of management expertise.

"As a believer in providing customers with as wide a breadth and depth of business acumen as

possible, it is important to me that our executive team have hands-on involvement with our resort boards. One of the things that makes us unique is that our top executives comanage our resorts. Executive committee members are onsite inspecting the villas and grounds, preparing the financial statements, assuring budget compliance and attending every board meeting. The traditional property manager / resort manager / regional manager model works well for larger companies; however, our clients appreciate having direct access to the CEO, CFO and some of the best minds in the business. My executive team and I have attended close to 500 board meetings."



#### **One Source**

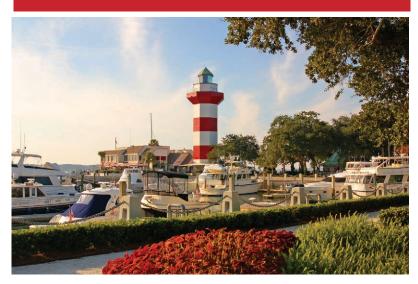
Explain the "One Source" business model you and your team have created?

"We aim to simplify the lives of our board members by providing most critical resort services under one roof. We offer a menu of hospitality services from which our clients can choose. Running a vacation ownership resort requires one to rely on many trades. Not only in the difficult times we are currently experiencing, but in many of the challenging businesses climates over the last several decades, sourcing, nurturing, and retaining relationships with quality vendors is difficult. The continually evolving labor crises have made it increasingly more challenging to deliver on the promise of a hassle-free vacation. This difficulty is magnified when depending on third-party service providers. When an owner or guest is not happy with something, the problem needs to be resolved immediately. Every hour in a one-week vacation is

We are committed to customizing solutions to address the needs of our owners: we have been finding ever-more efficient ways to resolve our clients challenges for decades. For example, twenty-five years ago, not satisfied with the price value relationship or timeliness of delivery of key services provided by third party vendors, we found ways to offer our clients these trades ourselves. Today's environment requires management companies to pivot quickly to properly serve ever changing owner needs. Having a wide array of ancillary services in-house has allowed us to do

Being the service provider allows us to control quality and cost. We hired experienced professionals in the fields of housekeeping, laundry, janitorial, landscaping, and pool service, established ancillary services teams and expertise, and vertically integrated them within our own organization. This way we can provide each association the services they desire at a high level and very attractive cost. The fact that we are resort operators first, shines through in the way we deliver these support services."

ne of the things that makes us unique is that our top executives comanage our resorts."







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### **Examples of RMC Resort Management's** vertically integrated services

- · Accounting
- · Reservations
- · Resales
- · Vacation Rentals
- · Collections
- · Cost Containment
- · Housekeeping and Janitorial
- · Laundry
- · Landscaping
- · Maintenance
- · Pool Care

### "Spin Ups"

What prompts the formation of new business units?

"Owner and board member requests. There have been inflection points over the last several decades during which our associations have come to us as trusted partners and asked us to start businesses to help them with specific challenges they were facing at the time. Chief amongst those businesses are:

- · Vacation Rentals
- Sales & Marketing
- · RCI Points Brokerage Service

We now have mature independent companies that provide these services not only to our client resorts, but also to resorts we don't manage.



### **Talent**

Tell me about your staff, leadership, and team.

"I'm a firm believer in hiring the best available talent. The trait I admire most is GRIT, the resilience and determination to do whatever it takes to provide our customers with an amazing vacation experience. We have been fortunate to assemble management team consisting of some of the brightest people in the industry. Most of our success can be attributed to the hard work and

dedication of our team. Our people genuinely care about our resort clients and understand the critical role we play in curating and enabling their vacation memories. I'm humbled, in a business this size, to have a number of associates with over 20 years' service."

### Continued on page 12



#### **Resales are Critical**

Why have you put such emphasis on Resort Source resales?

"In today's environment, every mature resort needs an active resale program. Monetization of unproductive inventory is top priority. You are not a successful manager if you are not also a successful reseller." Nahman's resale company, Resort Source, provides sales and marketing to nine resorts and takes individual listings from owners at all Hilton Head Island resorts. "Associations came to us asking for help with resales about twenty years ago. At that time the market was splintered, loosely regulated, and difficult for individual owners to navigate. Our resort clients wanted us involved because they trusted us. Understanding the importance a viable secondary market has to vacation ownership resorts, we decided to accept their challenge. Through our Certified Preowned program, we successfully established a fair and reliable



marketplace that allows mature resorts to protect their price integrity. Resales are difficult. Given the demographics of vacation ownership at mature resorts, at any given time there are more sellers than buyers. Today's buyer has different priorities and travel preferences than their parents. The vacation ownership products people are looking for today are distinctly different than those offered in the past."

#### **Epic Innovation**

What do you see as the next challenge for mature resorts and how will you overcome it?

"Mature resorts, by their nature, face many challenges. Being involved in resales for the last few decades we have witnessed buyers' flight from traditional vacation ownership to more flexible points-based products. Today's buyer demands many attributes mature resorts can't offer. Not being able to compete with modern vacation ownership platforms makes mature resorts a lot less attractive to the next generation of owners.

At the request of our client resorts, we developed a new vacation product that helps homeowners' associations monetize their unproductive inventory. Epic Vacations turns association-owned weeks into points and uses these points to fuel a new, limited term, low cost, pay-as-you-go membership offering today's vacationers the exact flexibility and travel amenities they want."



Always Open

How has the pandemic impacted you and your operations?

"We never closed. Our team worked incredibly hard to ensure the safety and comfort of our owners and associates. Disinfecting, sanitization and social distancing best practices were implemented in mid-March. It's paramount to us that all associates and owners feel safe at our resorts. Because the unknown can be frightening, we spend hundreds of hours on the phone with our owners helping them understand what to expect should they choose to vacation with us this summer. Equally important is working through the concerns our associates had and continue to have about keeping themselves and their family's virus free. Early on we made a commitment to keep our entire staff. Associates whose responsibilities were dependent on high occupancy were crosstrained and put to work in other departments until



### The Lunch Bunch

November 13, 1:00 p.m. ET, Joe Nahman, an Uncommon Executive. Meet a fellow resort executive who has been able to own his space by learning to better collaborate with resort owners.



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occupancy returned. We even offered work to associates spouses who were furloughed from other organizations."

#### Children's Children

What do you love most about what you do?

"I take great satisfaction in being part of creating vacation memories. Since I began my career here 30 years ago, I have come to know many owners. Not only have I experienced a lot of their milestones and had great joy in watching owners' children grow up, recently I have been introduced to a number of these children's children. It's wonderful to see the next generation carry on their family's vacation ownership tradition."

### **Secret to Success**

What advice would you give for how to thrive and succeed in our business?

"One must enjoy solving complex problems and be resilient. Hospitality is a demanding business. People look forward to travel and work hard to take their family on vacation. When they arrive at their destination, vacationers expect the facilities and service to be beyond reproach. My friends at RCI coined a phrase that I instill in my people from day one, "treat every vacation as if it was your own."

I often remind my team of the following words from poet Maya Angelou and how they relate to providing the perfect vacation experience: "people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel". It's our job to make every owner we come in contact with feel special.

It has been my passion and pleasure to serve a wonderful diverse group of owners, HOA's and distinctive resorts."

#### Joe Nahman: Accolades and Memberships

C.A.R.E. Pinnacle Award for lifetime achievement

Active memberships in ARDA, CAI, and VRMA.

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John Locher, RRP is founder of Locher &



Associates, a consulting services firm specializing in business development, marketing, the secondary market, and technology solutions. john@ johnlocher.com.

"You are not a successful manager if you are not a successful reseller."

Joe Nahman, President and **CEO** of Resort Source.

"No longer can resellers be order takers. We run our resale company like a developer sales operation with telemarketing, OPC's thank you gifts, scheduled tour waves, closing managers, and inhouse financing. Our sales staff are highly trained professionals. We conduct an in-depth discovery with each prospective owner to determine which of our many offerings best fits the way they want to vacation."

# Innovative Ideas for Keeping Guests Safe During the Pandemic

From flying guests private and hosting balcony concerts to leveraging robotics and partnering with local tourism bureaus, resort operators are finding new ways to help guests stay responsibly

by David Berger

With the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to impact occupancy rates of hotels and resorts across the U.S., resort operators are doing what they can to signal to travelers that their properties are taking every precaution to keep them safe, but this messaging — even with the continued support of brands and industry associations — is often inconsistent with the narrative consumers are hearing from other sources. The confidence to travel again is predicated on the confidence in the information being consumed. Competing information sources have left business and leisure travelers unsure which precautions are impactful.

To that end, here are a few examples of innovative approaches being taken by hoteliers across that globe that I think you'll find interesting and may even implement at your property.



### Fly Them Private!

Even though commercial airlines are doing their best to promote their efforts to keep customers safe, travelers aren't convinced. Fifty-eight percent of travelers have avoided air travel during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a recent survey conducted by the International Air Transport Association (IATA). Additionally, 33 percent of those surveyed plan on continuing to avoid air

**S** everal luxury properties...are now offering private flights to lure guests.

travel to avoid contracting COVID-19. Obviously, this isn't great news for the airline industry, but it's also a significant challenge for the hotel industry which traditionally receives many of those air passengers.

While some hoteliers are refocusing their efforts on guests traveling by other means of transportation, to increase occupancy others aren't letting people's fear of flying commercial amid a pandemic get in the way of filling beds with heads. Several luxury properties, such as the Four Seasons Resort Lanai in Hawaii, The Lake House on Canandaigua in New York, and the Waldorf Astoria Los Cabos Pedregal in Mexico, are now offering private flights to lure guests. Of course, not every hotelier can roll out the red carpet on the tarmac next to a private jet, but those that can are limiting guest exposure to COVID-19 while increasing hotel occupancy and revenue. many of us would like to take a breather. But in many locations, entertainment options are limited due to the pandemic. Instead of offering many of the same activity's competitors are marketing to guests, leading hotels are getting creative and using their properties distinct features to their advantage.

For example, Paséa Hotel & Spa, located in the heart of Huntington Beach, Calif., this summer began hosting balcony concerts where guests can watch live concerts from their balconies on Friday and Saturday evenings. During a show, bands perform on a roof on the property, which is situated below the guestrooms. The concert fee is tacked on to the room fee, so guests don't need to pay for additional tickets to enjoy the event. In effect, the guest rooms have been turned into luxury suites at a outdoor concert venue, except the ticket holders get to stay the night.



### **Balcony Concerts**

Everybody is looking for entertainment to pass the time. We've all been cooped up in our homes for the past several months and being able to take a trip, even if it's relatively close by, is how



### **Robot Butlers and Voice Assistants**

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guests and employees safer. Leading hoteliers are utilizing innovative technologies to keep their "social distance" from guests.

The pandemic has prompted a rapid expansion of voice assistant solutions atop Amazon's Alexa, IBM Watson, Alibaba's TMall Genie and other major platforms in hotels across the globe. These custom solutions enable guests to engage with the hotel amenities and services without having to put the guestroom phone up to their lips or stop by the front desk for a face to face with an associate. They also facilitate controls of the in-room television, lights, thermostats and more without the guest ever needing to touch a switch or germ-infested remote control.

Many hotels have coupled their voice assistant with a robot butler, to complete socially distanced deliveries. Leading hotels from the Westin Buffalo to the EMC2 in Chicago to the Aloft Hotel in Dublin, Calif., have successfully implemented complementary voice-assistantplus-robot-butler guest experiences that together fulfill socially distant guest service.

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged the management of leading hotels to rethink the way they use the technology available to them. Today, no longer a novelty, voice assistants are supporting guests with information critical to their stay, concierge recommendations, and service requests while robots are a full part of the team delivering wine, towels, groceries and more to guests who prefer contactless deliveries.

### **Promote Staycations**

With many people putting off traveling for the remainder of 2020, marketing successfully to tourists from afar has proved to be challenging for many resorts. It's because of this that many resort operators have switched to making special offers to locals

Partnering with local tourism boards on aligned messaging and marketing efforts can amplify the reach of these offers and campaigns. In Niagara Falls, tourism leaders are marketing to individuals who may feel safer driving across New York State instead of flying in from elsewhere. The city had to change the size of its targeted audience significantly, going from marketing to global travelers to local or regional ones. Destination Niagara USA, the county's tourism promotion agency, is using "Wide Open Spaces Now Open for Adventure" as the city's advertising slogan to promote the openness of the destination to visitors. On board with and supportive of these efforts? You guessed it — local hotels.

Whatever strategy you employ, there is no question that this pandemic is challenging all resort operators to think differently about their offerings to the market. The winners — and there will be winners coming out of this pandemic will redefine hospitality for the next generation.

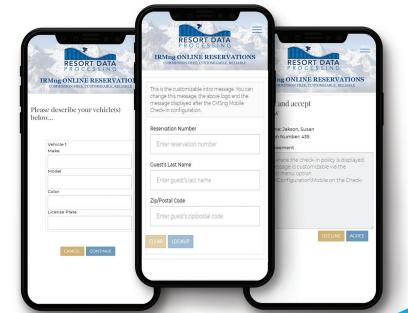
About the Author

David Berger was the first to conceive of, develop, and deliver a viable hotel voice assistant. He is the Founder and CEO



of Volara - the voice hub for the hospitality industry - which today enables hotel guests to get what they want, when they want it, just by speaking in their guest room

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### Meet Nikki, November Survivor

When I was diagnosed with invasive ductal carcinoma and ductal carcinoma

in situ, I had no idea what was ahead of me in terms of treatment, surgeries, and the emotional complexities that a cancer diagnosis can bring. I have always been a strong woman and I knew tackling this would be a challenge but I honestly I had no idea the extent of the emotional battle that was ahead of me. I entered in to the battle strong and knowing I could do hard things. My husband and I spoke with our kids about doing hard things and what the road ahead of us might look like. We were prepared to fight as a team, together!

It has been 17 months since my diagnosis and I have endured chemotherapy, a double mastectomy, expanders, exchange surgery/reconstruction; and most recently a hysterectomy and oophorectomy. The battle has been longer and harder than I ever anticipated.



Survivor Nikki

November Sponsor

At the end of the road, I've been declared No Evidence of Disease but not without the emotional and physical scars to show for it. I believe this vacation would be the bookend to a very long and trying 1 1/2 years of treatment. It would be the symbol of health, healing, and moving on past a cancer diagnosis and treatment. I can think of no better way to put cancer behind me, moving on with living my life, and celebrating coming out on the other side of fighting. I look

forward to THRIVING!

Nikki

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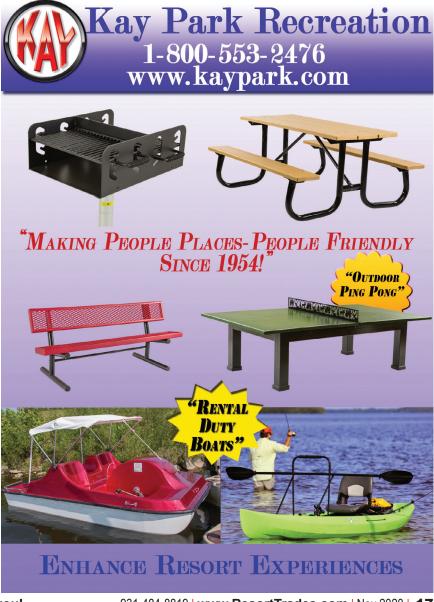
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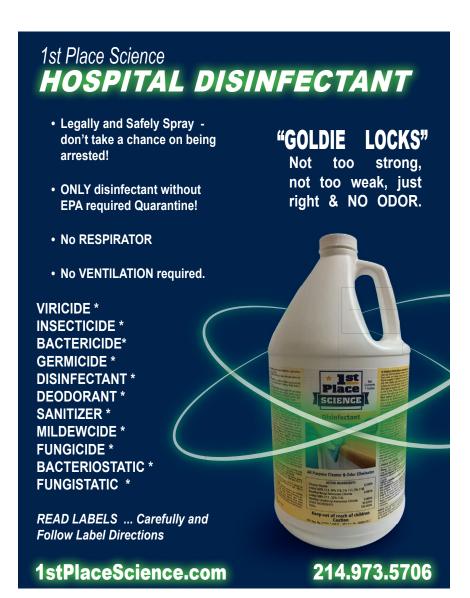


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## The Trades Wants YOU!

by Sharon Scott Wilson, RRP

Timeshare resort and associated professionals, including suppliers, managers, marketers, and developers, aren't taking hits resulting from COVID lying down! And neither are we: Resort Trades has been covering the timeshare industry and serving the industry's professionals for more than 30 years...and all for free! We aren't about to slow down in a time of crisis. In fact, we've even kicked it up a notch!

We're investing more resources - creative innovation, human sweat equity and cold, hard cash - to bring you relevant articles in your monthly print edition of Resort Trades, the latest news in our Resort Trades Weekly email, and, most recently, we've innovated a series of webinars, the Trades Lunch Bunch.

This is all free to you. We're not rolling in the dough, believe me. But it's a labor of love. The Trades Founder Tim Wilson and I have been connected to the timeshare industry since the '80s.

So, what's the quid pro quo, you might ask? What does The Trades ask in return? We simply ask that you show up! Tell our advertisers that you appreciate Resort Trades by attending our events, engaging with the speakers, subscribing to our stuff, and emailing me your suggestions for topics you'd like to learn about.

It's free! It won't cost you a thing and it will earn our sincere gratitude. Simply subscribe to Resort Trades Weekly (https://resorttrades. com/emagazine), attend a few webinars (https:// resorttrades.com/learningcenter), and subscribe to our YouTube channel (once we have 100 subscribers we can private label it, but for now that's https://www.youtube.com/channel/ UCREUp1ZYIQv4ugJrmhCi50Q).

### The Learning Center Needs You, Too!

Previous Learning Center events include several Town Halls, including "Resort Resilience" with

Jay Anderson from Pacific Grand Vacations, Ann Donahue from Raintree Resorts, Melanie Gring from Global Connections, and the team from Withum - Lena Combs and Tom Durkee. Unfortunately, there is no live video of this presentation, but the audio and slide presentation is on our YouTube channel.

The other two Town Halls are available on our YouTube channel (please, please subscribe so we can get a customized URL -- https://www.youtube.com/channel/ UCREUp1ZYIQv4ugJrmhCi50Q). These are "Innovative Sales & Marketing" with Shari Levitin and Ron Roberts; and "New Rules for Owner Communications" with Lisa Kobek and Sean Coogan.

In September we launched a series of 30-minute webinars we like to compare to a "Brown Bag Lunch." Scheduled for a half-hour lunchtime break (or brunch for some), these included "Fierce Conversations" with Debra Crombie from Sterling Training Group and "Results-Proven Marketing Strategies for a New Normal" with David Stroeve from ADS Consulting Services. Scheduled for October as of press time were "Leadership Lessons" with Scott Bahr of CX Artisans; "Resort Budgeting Tips in the New Normal" with Lena Combs from Withum; "Storytelling to Connect Owners & Members to Your Brand" with Melody Bostic Brown, RCI; and "Keep Calm & Camp On!" with Jimmy Danz, Travel Resorts of America.

At press time we have two Lunch Bunch presentations scheduled for November: The first features Suzzi (Allbrycht) Morrison, President, S3A, Inc., who presents "Bringing Technology Home - Benefits, Balance and the Bottom Line."

Suzzi asks us, "Have you stopped to consider how your resort's technology can help you respond to the new normal?" As resorts and

businesses create their "post-pandemic" organizations, IT departments find themselves at the epicenter of operational decision-making. Attend this enlightening session to hear:

- · Ideas for health-safe office redesign and innovative scheduling
- · Best ways to secure your data associates and customers
- How IT can help improve your customer experience
- Recommendations for password security
- Cost-saving strategies to save money today

On November 13, at 1:00 p.m. ET, we'll have the opportunity to meet Joe Nahman, whose companies RMC Resort Management, Epic Vacations, Resort Source, and Hilton Head Accommodations have tackled and wrestled with the same issues as every timeshare company. In a session called "Joe Nahman, an Uncommon Executive," Joe discusses:

- · Creating collaborative partnerships with
- The benefits of executives who roll up their sleeves and get hands-on with operations.
- Give owners a menu of hospitality services.
- Address labor shortages, plus learn the benefits about hiring the best
- · Learn to pivot quickly as owner needs change.

#### Read All About It!

Resort Trades magazine has provided articles to complement most of our Trades Lunch Bunch speakers. Please do us a favor: [it bears repeating] please take a look at ResortTrades.com/LearningCenter and check out our offerings. And please don't forget to subscribe to our YouTube channel, plus send your suggestions for future topics of interest to Sharon@TheTrades.com.

### **NOV. 2020 LUNCH BUNCH EVENTS:**

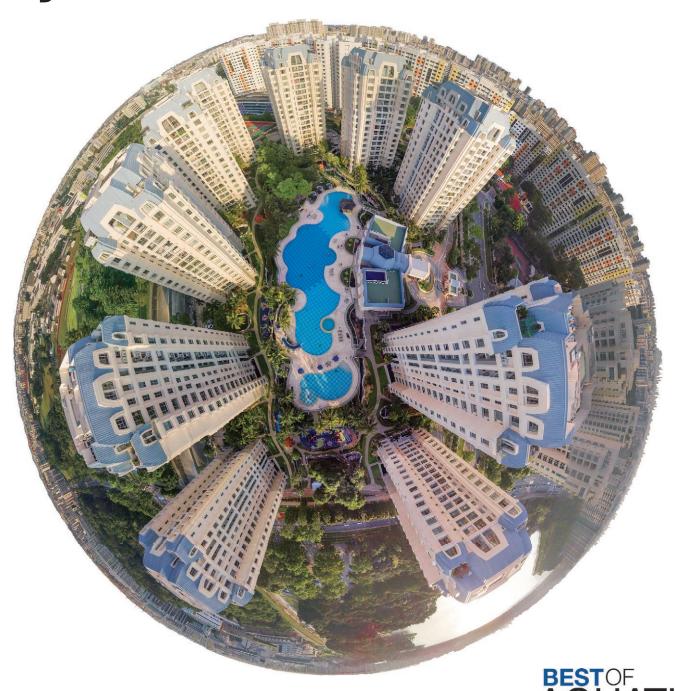


November 6, 1:00 p.m. ET Suzzi (Allbrycht) Morrison, President, S3A, Inc., presents "Bringing Technology Home -Benefits, Balance and the Bottom



November 13, 1:00 p.m. ET, "Joe Nahman, an Uncommon **Executive.**" Meet a fellow resort executive who has been able to own his space by learning to better collaborate with resort owners.

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# Race in the Workplace How to Create an Inclusive Environment

by Phillip M. Perry

Businesses everywhere are taking a closer look at their personnel practices in response to the nation's heightened awareness of racial disparities. Employers need to fine tune their anti-discrimination policies to attract better quality employees and keep top performers from jumping ship. By taking steps to eliminate workplace bias management can foster an environment free of racial tensions and resentments that can damage the health of the enterprise.

Systemic racism has become a topic of primary interest around the nation. As headlines blare news about racial disparities in the society at large, businesses everywhere are asking themselves an important question: What inequities exist in our own organization and how can we rectify them?

"This is a good time to deal with racial equality in the workplace because recent news events have made the topic uppermost in our minds," says David Campt, founder of The Dialogue Company, a diversity and inclusion consulting firm in Eden, N.C. (thedialoguecompany.com). "We're seeing something that might be a real tipping point in the nation, and that will be talked about 30, 40, or 50 years from now. When something important is happening in society we don't want to let discomfort keep us from discussing what's obviously on peoples' minds."

#### **Good for business**

Reducing the business world's racial disparities is a matter not only of social justice but also of profitability, says Campt. "One of the things we've learned over the years is that diversity within teams produces a diversity of thought that can lead to better outcomes if it is handled well."

Organizations with good reputations can attract more top performers, and fair treatment can keep them from jumping ship. "People very often leave companies because they feel they are simply being tolerated rather than included," says Bob Gregg, Co-chair of the Employment Practice Law Group at Boardman and Clark LLC, Madison, WI (boardmanclark.com). "A toxic environment can lead to constant hiring and retraining of replacements for people who leave."

Then there is the potential for litigation. "Discrimination or harassment in the workplace can spark lawsuits that result in money judgments not only against the company but also against individual supervisors," says Yvette V. Gatling, a shareholder in the Tyson's Corner, Virginia, office of San Franciscobased Littler, the world's largest employment law practice representing management (littler.com).

And litigation is indeed starting to pile up. "People are more prone than ever before to rush to a lawyer if they feel like their workplace is a hostile environment,"

says James J. McDonald, Jr., managing partner at the Irvine, Calif., office of Fisher & Phillips (fisherphillips.com). "More companies are starting to be called out for being insensitive or not taking equality seriously." The resulting media publicity, he adds, can be as damaging as the direct financial penalties. "Employers today have to be concerned about the costs of lawsuits in terms not only of money and time but also of reputation."



#### Let's talk

In creating a workplace of inclusion, the first step is to realize that discrimination is generally unintentional. "The most important mental shift we can make is to reconceptualize the problem of racial bias," says Campt. "Rather than a crime against the social contract done only by evil people, bias is more like a glitch in thinking that everybody is subject to. We are biased not because we are bad people but because our brains are inherently that way."

That collective unconscious mindset sparks real world discriminatory acts. "Most people are not racists or bigots, but they can make judgments based on stereotypes they have learned from the surrounding culture," says McDonald. "As a result, they make decisions based on race or other protected categories without even realizing it." Such decisions can include hiring, mentoring, promoting and the assigning of work duties

A business looking to upgrade its workplace environment needs to start by addressing any organizational disparities. And one way to do so is to talk about it. "It's a good idea to have what some companies call a 'town hall meeting' to discuss the topic of race relations," says Gatling. "During this meeting higher levels of management can discuss current events and company policies. For remote workers, the event may take place over the Internet on Zoom or Webex."

The organization should present the meeting as a tool for improving operations—not just as a vehicle for paying lip service to equality. "Management needs to completely own the process," says Dr. Kenneth Kaye, a Chicago-based workplace psychologist (kaye.com). "There should not be the slightest nod to any statement similar to, 'Sorry about this. We have to check this box because some people have complained.""

Instead, says Kaye, the person leading the meeting might explain its purpose in these terms:

"We need to talk about how—not whether—we can become a comfortably diverse organization. We are going to be that way for three reasons. Number one, it's the kind of organization or department that I want to lead. Number two, it's the best way to be productive. And number three, it's the law. Let's start by discussing any of the ways we have failed up to the present time to be a group where racial differences have no effect on anyone's collaboration, productivity, or evaluation. And then we'll talk about the obstacles and some ideas to fix that."

If a structured conversation is a good idea, or even a necessity, it's also true that careful planning is required to pull it off. One size does not fit all. "Your business might benefit from a meeting to discuss race relations," says McDonald. "But you have to know your workforce. Are people upset? Are they talking about racial matters to such an extent that you feel a meeting might be cathartic? Then I think having an open discussion and letting people be heard might be worthwhile. But you need someone to lead it who will require respect on the part of attendees. And bear in mind that in some cases a meeting might lead to more tension and make matters worse."

#### Break the ice

As the above comments suggest, it's possible for a staff meeting to backfire. It's for that very reason that many businesses will be fearful of taking the plunge. "Managers of any color may be uncomfortable talking about workplace race relations," says Kaye. "And they may fear that employees who are also uncomfortable with the topic will wind up offending one another."

Campt says management can help overcome the discomfort surrounding discussions about race—as well as set the right tone—by leading with a degree of vulnerability. "By owning up to bias and establishing a determination to work on it, the manager makes it much harder for people to say they are immune from it and much easier for everyone to discuss it."

He suggests leading with some words like these:

"Bias is something we are all subject to. I am not a perfect person either. I am a human being subject to thoughts that are sometimes problematic."

Still got cold feet? Sometimes obtaining professional help is wise. "Skill at this level of communication is not widespread," says Campt. "A good diversity and inclusion professional can often provide conversational tools to help a culture navigate the topic. There is value in engaging people who know how to be facilitators around these issues, and who are not doing it for the first time."

Rather than a crime against the social contract done only by evil people, bias is more like a glitch in thinking that everybody is subject to."

When an organization does undergo this shift in thinking people can discuss workplace bias in a more enlightened way. "We can start to look at how pervasive bias against women and people of color--not just in our company, but in our society—might be affecting our business decisions," says Campt. "And we can look in a different light at our recruitment practices, vendor choices, and hiring and promotion decisions."



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#### Retool business systems

The forward-looking company will take steps to re-engineer any policies and practices riddled with hidden biases. "The most important thing for every business is to establish anti-discrimination and antiharassment policies," says Gatling. "They should cover all aspects of employment including hiring, evaluations, promotions, and raises.'

Written policies should also:

 Prohibit insensitive statements "People need to understand they have a duty to avoid making racially charged jokes or comments," says Gregg. "And if they see a coworker doing either, they must speak up and say, 'Hey, look, that is not appropriate for our workplace.

Such language must be prohibited even if the individual using it belongs to a protected group. "Many people will use loaded terms among themselves, making jokes that would be highly offensive if done by someone else," says Gregg. "People need to understand if it is not appropriate for one person, it is not appropriate for anyone."

Outlaw bullying

"Courts have said repeatedly that bullying is the glide path to harassment under the law," says Gregg. "While it may not at first mention race or sex, as bullying continues people will start to pick up on the fact that it's happening to individuals who belong to certain groups."

 Require reporting Employees should understand that they are required to report anything they experience (or see) in the workplace that may relate to harassment or discrimination. "The reporting mechanism should include some individuals who are outside the victim's chain of command because the one committing the discrimination or harassment may be that person's supervisor," says Gatling. "It's also a good idea to provide for anonymous reporting by setting up a hotline.'

Require response to reports "Ignoring a report of harassment or discrimination can put your business in legal jeopardy," says Gatling. "You should do a thorough investigation, which means talking to every witness possible.
Then you should take action on the results. You also should keep good documentation on how you investigated, and to get back to the victim to let them know what has transpired."

Prohibit retaliation

"People need to know there will be no consequences if they come forward with a report about harassment or discrimination," says Gatling. "While the law prohibits retaliation, it's always helpful to remind people and supervisors of that fact and of your organization's policy prohibiting

Make sure everyone realizes the policies exist to ensure fairness and profitability. "Employees need to know that the purpose of good company policies is to have an effective workplace, not to simply comply with the law," says Gregg. "The organization of the purpose of good company policies is to have an effective workplace, not to simply comply with the law," says Gregg. "The organization of the purpose of the pu racial inequality and discrimination can harm the company.

### Communication

While having the right diversity and inclusion policies is vital, they also must be communicated adequately to the staff. Including them in the employee handbook and on the company intranet is a good start. In addition, employees should sign statements that they have read the policies as opposed to just receiving a gloss about them during orientation. "Very often in court cases, people will deny they ever saw their employer's policies," says Gregg

Too, managers and supervisors need to buy into the policies and understand how to implement them.

And they need to set the right example, avoiding remarks about modern-day societal events that might on the surface seem innocent but that can spark misunderstandings. "Managers have to be careful not to say things in the workplace that subordinates might take as avidence of bigs." subordinates might take as evidence of bias," says McDonald. "Comments about contemporary politics and culture can be especially risky. What the manager feels is freedom of speech an employee may take a different way."

McDonald gives the example of a supervisor who says something like this: "The immigration laws are too lax and I wish Trump would build that wall." Making that statement in itself is not unlawful." says McDonald. However, the words might lead a Hispanic subordinate to feel the manager is biased against Hispanic people. If something negative should happen down the road to that employee, she might conclude it was the result of discrimination.

Managers and employees alike need to understand the harm that can be contained in unthoughtful comments. "Sometimes people will say hurtful things without realizing they are hurtful," says Campt. "And then very often they feel that because they did not intend to hurt anyone, no one should feel that way. So, part of what can be inculcated in a culture is an awareness that both intent and impact matter. Embracing that fact can be a useful conflict resolution tool.'

Enlightened communications and respect toward others, combined with a carefully designed and implemented diversity and inclusion program, can obviate racial resentments and foster a more collegial atmosphere. The re sult can be more effective teamwork, a more efficient workplace and a more profitable business.

Phillip M. Perry is an award-winning business journalist based in New York City. He covers management, employment law, finance and marketing for scores of business magazines.

#### **AMENITIES**



Essential Amenities Phone 1: 800-541-6775

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Website:

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Email: drogers@Fairshare.Solutions Website: www.Fairshare.Solutions Contact: Dennis F Rogers

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Website:

www.allianceassociationbank.com

Contact: Stacy Dyer

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Website: www.ColebrookFinancial.com

Contact: Bill Ryczek

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Contact: Rich Budnik

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### **RENTALS AND RESALE** Timeshares nly

Timeshares Only LLC 4700 Millenia Blvd. Ste. 250 Orlando FL 32839 Phone 800-610-2734 Fax: 407-477-7988

Fmail: Ryan.Pittman@timesharesonly.com Website: www.timesharesonly.com Contact: Ryan Pittman Specialty: Timeshares Only is a cooperative advertising company that has served the timeshare resale market for over 25 years. We connect timeshare buyers, sellers, and renters on our online resale platform. Timeshares Only also enhances the timeshare product value by providing owners with maintenance fee relief, numerous monetization options, and exclusive access to the largest selection of travel benefits at remarkable prices. It's a whole new



timeshare resale experience.

**Bay Tree Solutions** 400 Northridge Rd., Ste. 540 Atlanta, GA 30350 Phone: 800-647-4130

Email: DMilbrath@BayTreeSolutions.

Website: www.BayTreeSolutions.com

Contact: Doug Milbrath Specialty: Bay Tree Solutions is an advertising and marketing company that specializes in assisting owners to resell their vacation ownership interests at a fair price. By avoiding desperate sellers and distressed properties and by using our consultative method, for eleven years we have repeatedly guided clients who sell for prices 30-to-50 percent higher than our closest competitors. Bay Tree provides resort operators, as well as servicing and collection agencies, with a trusted ally

### **SALES AND MARKETING**



ADS Consulting 8612 Titleist Cr, Las Vegas, NV 89117

Phone: 702-919-0550 Email: dstroeve@ads-cs.com

Website: www.adsconsultingservice.com

Contact: David Stroeve Specialty: ADS Consulting is the predominant vacation ownership sales and leadership development firm. We specialize in 3 primary specialties. We increase sales PRODUCTIVITY by delivering the number #1 two-day seminar workshops. We enhance leadership PERFORMANCE and effectiveness by elevating their wisdom, expertise, and motivation. Lastly, we increase bottom-line PROFITS by providing the most comprehensive revenue and profit report by delivering our D5 Analysis. We are experts at helping companies improve their sales and marketing systems and processes. We are the right solution.

### **SALES AND MARKETING**



Resort Management Services 10745 Myers Way S Seattle, WA 98168

Ph: (888)577-9962 Fax: (206)439-1049 Email: doug@resortmanagementservices.

Website: www.resortmanagementservices.

Contact: Douglas Murray

Specialty: Resort Management Services provides resort developers and HOAs with customized sales programs that generate revenue and enhance benefits for current owners, We reinvigorate membership usage and specializes in meeting with owners and members in their communities. Targeting users and non-users, RMS develops innovative new benefits tailored to improve specific member needs.

### **SALES TRAINING**



Levitin Group

PO Box 683605, Park City, UT 84068

Phone: (435)649-0003 Email: shari@sharilevitin.com Website: www.levitinlearning.com Contact: Shari D Levitin

Specialty: Shari Levitin is the author of the bestseller, Heart and Sell, a frequent contributor to Forbes, CEO Magazine, Huffington Post, and guest lecturer at Harvard. Shari started in the timeshare industry in 1997, and her team has increased revenues for companies like Wyndham, Hilton, and RCI in over 40 countries.

Recently, Shari has been recognized as one of the:

- Top 10 Voices in Sales for LinkedIn
- Top 20 Sales Experts in the Salesforce documentary, "The Story of Sales."
- Top 50 Keynote Speakers
- 38 Most Influential Women in Sales www.linkedin.com/in/sharilevitin/

### SHADE PRODUCTS



FiberBuilt Umbrellas & Cushions PO BOX 9060

Fort Lauderdale, FL 33310

Ph: (866)667-8668 Fax: (954)484-4654 Email: jordan@fiberbuiltumbrellas.com Website: www.fiberbuiltumbrellas.com

Contact: Jordan Beckner

Specialty: FiberBuilt is the leading manufacturer of contract grade fiberglass ribbed umbrellas for the hospitality industry. Our innovative rib construction ensures strength, resilience and durability across our full line of shade products. Our wide selection of custom cushions and pillows make a fashion statement at competitive prices. Every pool area, outdoor lounge and al fresco dining space is enhanced and made more comfortable with FiberBuilt's umbrellas and cushions which complement your design aesthetic and fit your budget.

### **TECHNOLOGY**



SPI Software 444 Brickell Avenue, #760; Miami FL 33131

Phone: (305)858-9505 Fax: (305)858-2882 Email: info@spiinc.com Website: www.spiinc.com Contact: Alex Gata

Specialty: SPI is the preferred software for selling and managing timeshare properties, vacation ownership clubs and resorts. SPI's Orange timeshare software is a comprehensive suite of services that includes sales and marketing, property management, billing maintenance and more. SPI is a global company with our software installed on five continents providing a breakthrough product based on over 30 years of industry experience. This includes an advanced user interface, all major integrations and cloud-based extendible applications.

### TRADE ASSOCIATIONS



C.A.R.E. Cooperative Association of Resort

P.O. Box 2803, Harrisonburg, VA 22801 Phone: 800-636-5646 (U.S. & Canada) 540-828-4280 (Outside U.S. & Canada)

FAX: 703-814-8527 Email: info@care-online.org Website: www.care-online.org Contact: Linda Mayhugh, President Specialty: Established in 1985, C.A.R.E. is one of the industry's leading associations in ethical standards and value propositions. Its internationally diverse member base includes Resort Developers, Management and Exchange Companies, HOA's, Travel Clubs and Wholesalers as well as industry suppliers bringing value-added revenue enhancement opportunities. Members that possess or seek rentable inventory for fulfillment set the foundation of C.A.R.E. with a multitude of scenarios for securing client vacations, increased inventory utilization and heightened yield

I definitely look at every page of **Resort Trades each** month to see what is happening in the industry. I find it very informative and know that others on my team are reading it, too."

Jon Fredricks, CEO Welk Resorts LLC

Global Connections, Inc. 5360 College Blvd, Suite 200 Overland Park, KS 66211 Phone 1: 913-498-0960

Email: MGring@exploregci.com Website: http://www.exploregci.com

Specialty: Global Connections, Inc. (GCI) - A highly respected resort developer and leader in the travel club and vacation industry, offering travel club fulfillment and servicing, travel search engine development, component-based products, private labeled leisure benefits, exit and affinity programs, premium incentives, resort condominium and cruise fulfillment, wholesale and exchange opportunities. GCI is the owner and developer of resorts in California, Colorado, Florida and Tennessee and further owns and leases multiple resort condominiums throughout the U.S., Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean.



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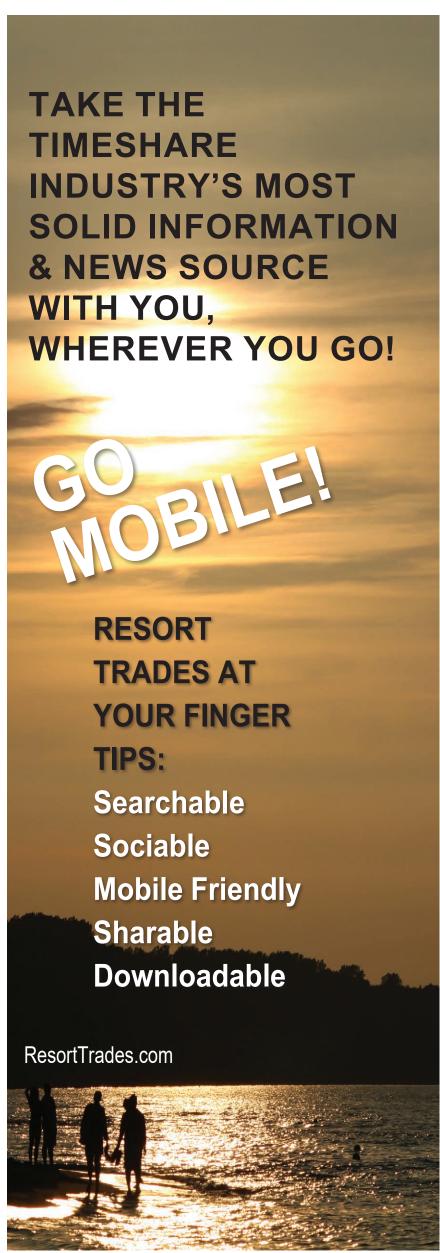
Lauderdale, FL, 33304 Phone: 800-684-9419 Fax: 954-707-5155 Email: salesinfo@true-incentive.com

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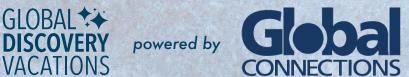


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