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2025 INNTouch

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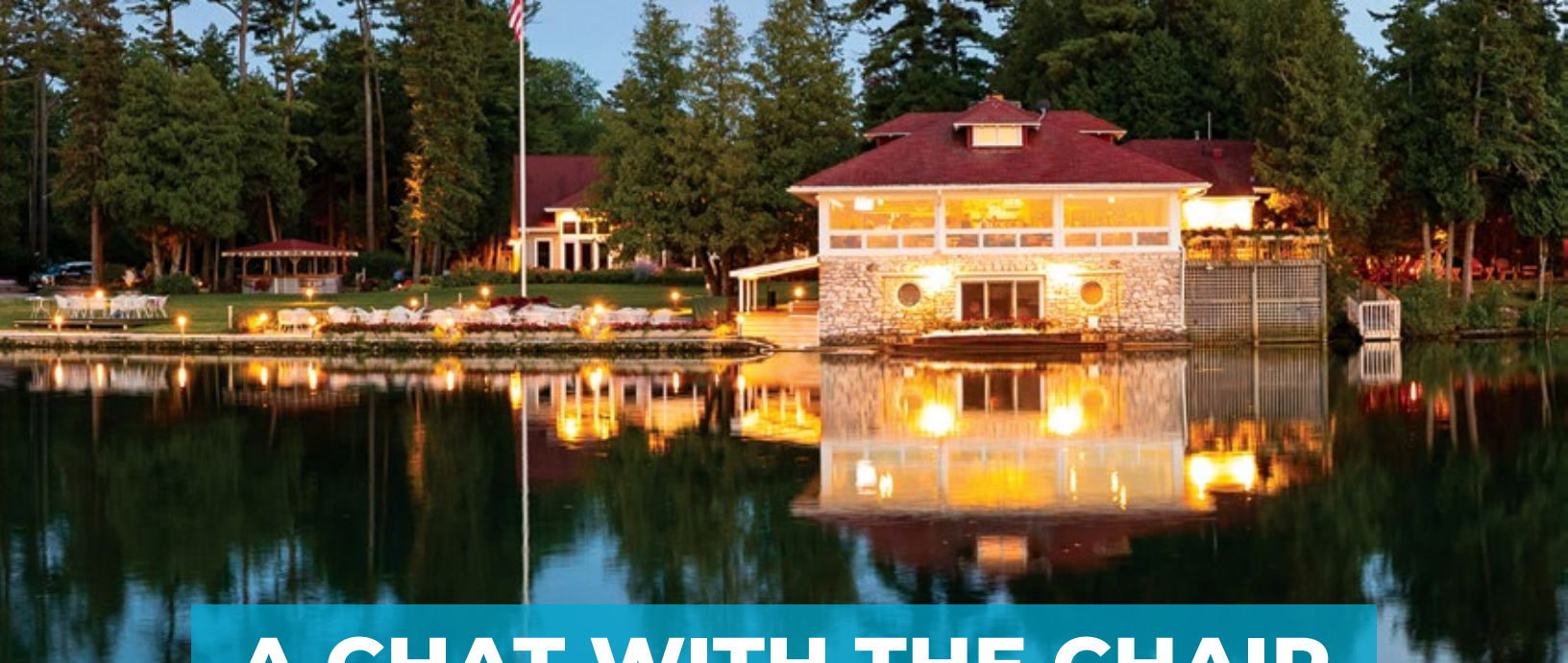
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A CHAT WITH THE CHAIR

Dear WHLA Members,

I'm pleased to welcome you to this year's edition of InnTouch with WHLA! Now in its second year as an annual publication, InnTouch has quickly become an important resource for our members. From the latest industry updates to our comprehensive Products & Services Directory, this publication is designed to support and connect everyone in Wisconsin's lodging community.

Looking back over the past year, I'm proud of how the Wisconsin Hotel & Lodging Association continues to grow and strengthen its role. We remain focused on advocating for our industry, providing valuable education, and fostering collaboration among members. Through these efforts, WHLA is helping Wisconsin's lodging sector not just meet challenges, but thrive in today's environment.

One of the most exciting parts of our work is expanding our advocacy reach. Events like WHLA Action Day in Madison have been great opportunities for members to engage directly with lawmakers. Plus, we made a big impact at the national level by sending the largest state delegation to AHLA's Hotel on the Hill event in Washington, D.C.—a demonstration of our commitment and influence.

This issue of InnTouch with WHLA features a wide range of articles highlighting the incredible work happening across our industry. From innovative vendor insights on improving operations and guest experience to a showcase of member-led property improvement projects across the state, there's no shortage of inspiration. You'll also find our expanded Products & Services Directory—a valuable resource for discovering trusted vendors who support Wisconsin's lodging industry.

I encourage every member to stay involved in WHLA. Whether that means volunteering for a committee, attending events, or simply staying connected, your participation is what keeps our association strong and effective.

On a personal note, serving as WHLA Chairman has been a rewarding experience. It's an honor to work alongside so many dedicated professionals who share a passion for advancing Wisconsin hospitality. I've made a career out of saying "yes," and I hope that when this organization asks you to participate, you respond with an enthusiastic Wisconsin "Yes." Thank you for your ongoing support and for being part of this amazing organization. Here's to another successful year ahead.



Warm regards,

Rory Madsen
2025 Board Chair
WHLA Board of Directors

2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

WHLA's Board of Directors is made up of leaders from the lodging industry across the state. These elected individuals come from properties of different types and sizes, which gives them unique perspectives to contribute to the association. The WHLA Board of Directors meets quarterly to fulfill the mission of the association and to ensure its policies are meeting the needs of its members.

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Celebrating the Strength of Our Vendor Community and the Momentum of WHLA

At our Annual Meeting back in November we proudly reflected on a year of steady progress, strong member engagement, and renewed direction for the future. With 584 total members and a lodging member renewal rate of 87.9%, WHLA continues to be a thriving and united voice for Wisconsin's lodging industry. These numbers speak not only to the strength of our community, but to the shared value our members find in being part of this association.

A key part of that value comes from our associate vendor members. These valued partners are more than just suppliers — they are educators, innovators, and solution-providers who enhance our industry through the knowledge, tools, and expertise they bring to the table. Whether it's cutting-edge technology, operational insights, or products and services tailored to the unique needs of lodging professionals, our vendors help WHLA members stay competitive, informed, and ready to meet evolving guest expectations.

Throughout the past year, our associate members have demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to supporting Wisconsin's lodging industry — by exhibiting at our events, contributing to educational sessions, and offering exclusive opportunities and discounts to WHLA members. Their support strengthens not only individual businesses, but our entire statewide lodging community. We encourage all members to look to our associate vendors as trusted resources and valued collaborators. Take a look at the Products and Services Directory section of this magazine for a full list of our partners.

This past year also marked a time of exciting transition and renewed focus for WHLA. Under the direction of our Board of Directors, the association has taken important steps to chart a new course for the future — one that positions us to better support members through advocacy, education, and industry leadership. Their vision and guidance have been instrumental in helping WHLA adapt to change while staying grounded in our core mission: to be the trusted voice advancing Wisconsin's hotel and lodging industry through advocacy, education, and connecting communities.

As we look ahead, we are energized by the opportunity to build on this momentum — continuing to grow our membership, deepen member engagement, and deliver value across every segment of our association. On behalf of the WHLA team, thank you to every member — lodging and vendor alike — for the role you play in our success.

And to our Board of Directors: thank you for your leadership, commitment, and courage in steering WHLA into a future filled with opportunity. Your work ensures that our association remains a strong and forward-thinking advocate for Wisconsin's lodging industry.

Kind regards,

Bill Elliott, CAE
WHLA President & CEO



MEET OUR TEAM

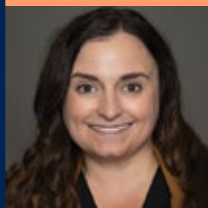
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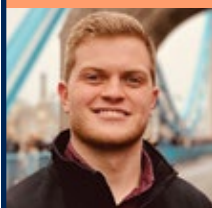
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Elevating Guest Experience with Quality Linens and Emerging Amenities

By Gunderson Uniform & Linen

When you're in the hospitality industry, you know comfort is not just a luxury—it's a science. You're likely aware that every element, from the ambiance of a room to the quality of linens, plays a crucial role in shaping your guests' experience.

With evolving guest preferences, incorporating high-quality linens & emerging amenities can enhance comfort, cleanliness, and overall satisfaction.

Cleanliness Matters to Your Guests

Surveys show that **78% of guests** say that cleanliness is the most important factor when choosing a hotel. This does not just mean whole room cleanliness; it includes the room's bedding & linens.

We all know how it feels to pull back the covers ready to get a good night's sleep after a long day's travel. Imagine if you pulled your covers back only to find remnants of other guests in your hotel bed. It's not a good feeling and can easily ruin an entire hotel stay! Most guests pay close attention to the

cleanliness of the bedding in hotels, so you should, too. When there are dozens of hotels to choose from in almost every city, don't give your guests any reason to look elsewhere, or even worse — leave a bad review!

Go with a linen provider that keeps your products clean and safe, making sure when your guests finally fall into bed, they are met with freshness and comfort.

How Linens Impact Customer Perception

Hotel guests are generally there for either work or pleasure. Either way, the last thing they need on their trip is a negative experience with their bed sheets or towels. According to a statistic from **Laundry Ledger**, linens can contribute to up to 20% of a person's perception of a hotel experience.

Considering how often having a linen rental program can be taken for granted, this statistic really shows how much the quality of your linens can shape guests' overall impression of your hotel or resort.



Emerging Amenities Shaping Hospitality Trends

Beyond linens, hotels and lodging facilities are embracing innovative amenities to meet rising guest expectations. Some of the top emerging trends include:

- **Wellness-Oriented Features:**
Health-conscious travelers appreciate in-room fitness equipment, guided meditation services, and air purification systems.
- **Smart Room Technology:**
App-controlled lighting, temperature, and entertainment systems allow guests to personalize their stay with ease.
- **Sustainability-Focused Offerings:**
Eco-friendly linens, refillable toiletry dispensers, and energy-efficient appliances appeal to environmentally conscious travelers.
- **Flexible Service Options:**
Contactless check-in, self-service kiosks, & on-demand housekeeping provide added convenience and customization.

Meeting and Exceeding Guest Expectations

Providing a seamless & comfortable guest experience requires attention to both tangible and intangible details. Quality linens paired with thoughtful, modern amenities create an inviting atmosphere that leaves a lasting impression.

As hospitality trends continue to evolve, staying up to date with guest preferences and industry advancements will help ensure continued satisfaction and success.





TIME & MOTION STUDY

By Standard Textile

How to Improve Housekeeping Efficiency



Color-coded linens

Reducing the time a task takes to complete, even slightly, can significantly boost productivity. For instance, if a housekeeper reduces room cleaning time by just 1 minute, they save 3,900 minutes or 65 hours yearly (assuming 5 workdays per week, 15 rooms per day). That's over 8 full workdays saved per year from just a 1-minute improvement.

Given ongoing staffing shortages, hospitality professionals should continually seek ways to enhance housekeeping efficiency. One effective approach is conducting a housekeeping time and motion study to evaluate and improve processes.

What is a Housekeeping Time and Motion Study?

Time studies involve observing a repetitive task and recording how the task was performed and how long the task took to complete. Studies observe a variety of workers completing the same set of tasks, allowing for the calculation of an average time to completion.

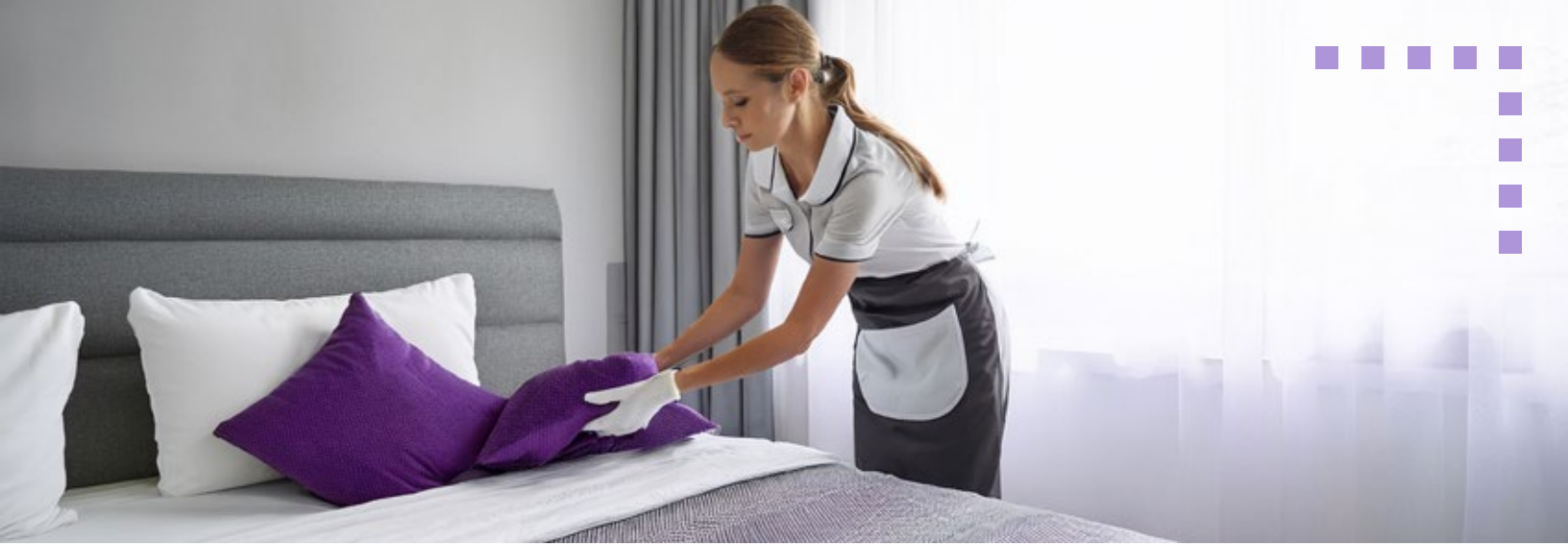
To take the study even further, you can also record the body movements and distance a worker traveled during each step. This is what's known as a time & motion study, and it allows for a greater opportunity to identify inefficiencies, since it helps tell the story behind the time stamps.

Time and motion studies are common in manufacturing due to the repetitive nature of tasks. Similarly, housekeeping, with its predictable patterns and consistent tasks, is an ideal candidate for these studies.

Benefits of Housekeeping Time and Motion Studies

Time and motion studies offer numerous benefits, such as:

- **Identifying Training Opportunities:** They reveal inconsistencies in task performance, highlighting areas for additional training and standardization.



- **Reducing Injuries:**
By pinpointing activities that contribute to common injuries (e.g., back or wrist issues), studies help refine procedures to prioritize safety.
- **Enhancing Guest Experience:**
Streamlining room cleaning ensures consistent cleanliness and reduces delays, leading to greater guest satisfaction.
- **Improving Staff Morale:**
Involving housekeeping staff in process improvements fosters collaboration, making their work simpler and more rewarding.
- **Identifying Bottlenecks:**
Studies identify the most time-consuming tasks, enabling targeted improvements. For example,

one study found bed-making accounted for nearly 23% of housekeepers' time, twice as much as the next task.

Steps to Conduct a Time and Motion Study

To maximize the effectiveness of a time and motion study, follow these steps:

1. **Define Your Goal:**
Clearly outline what you aim to achieve, such as understanding task durations, assessing staffing levels, or identifying training needs.
2. **Determine the Scope:**
Decide how many rooms, room types, or floors to observe, and whether to gather detailed notes or focus solely on timing tasks.

3. **Create an Observation Form:**
Standardized forms ensure consistency, particularly if multiple observers are involved.
4. **Select Participants:**
Choose trained, experienced staff representative of your team. Conduct the study during a typical day to ensure realistic observations.
5. **Avoid the Hawthorne Effect:**
The Hawthorne Effect is when subjects alter their behavior because they know they are being watched. To minimize this, explain the study's purpose to staff beforehand, emphasizing its benefits for efficiency and their daily routines.

Post-Study Actions

After completing the study, analyze the data for patterns and outliers. Use the findings to address inefficiencies, develop training programs, and refine processes. Engage your staff by discussing the results and inviting their input on potential improvements.

Additionally, plan for regular time and motion studies. Continuous observation helps track the impact of changes and uncovers new opportunities for refinement, ensuring ongoing improvements in efficiency and productivity.



This article was originally published by Standard Textile.



TRANSFORMING WISCONSIN HOSPITALITY

WHLA Members Invest in the Guest Experience

By Lexie Mallary, Wisconsin Hotel & Lodging Association

Looking to launch your next property project?

Explore WHLA's Products & Services Directory on page 25 for trusted partners in construction, design, FF&E, and more.

From historic hotels to lakeside resorts, WHLA members across Wisconsin are investing in the future of hospitality — transforming spaces, elevating experiences, & reaffirming their commitment to exceptional guest service.

Across the state, lodging properties are re-imagining their spaces to meet evolving guest expectations, improve operations, and elevate the overall travel experience. From small-scale upgrades to full-scale renovations, these property improvements reflect the creativity, resilience, and guest-first focus that define Wisconsin's hospitality industry.

The following projects represent just a few of the many examples of WHLA members investing in their future. Whether enhancing aesthetics, modernizing infrastructure, or expanding guest amenities, these improvements highlight the strength and adaptability of Wisconsin's lodging community.



Rustic Charm, Refreshed: The Waters of Minocqua

At A Glance:

- **Property location:** Minocqua
- **Project summary:** Guest room refresh
- **Completion date:** 2/13/2025
- **WHLA Associate Vendor(s) used:** Guest Supply

Nestled in Wisconsin's scenic Northwoods, The Waters of Minocqua recently embarked on a sweeping property enhancement that reflects both the heritage of the region and the evolving needs of today's travelers. Their multi-phase renovation included a full refresh of all 106 guest rooms, as well as additional improvements to the on-site restaurant and event center.

Guest rooms were redesigned to offer contemporary comfort while preserving the rustic-lodge charm that defines the property's identity. New furniture

and finishes introduced modern sensibilities without compromising the warm, wooded aesthetic guests have come to love. Updated lighting and tech features improved functionality and comfort, while thoughtful design choices honored the property's Northwoods roots.

The property also completed improvements to its restaurant and event center, further enhancing the overall guest experience across leisure and group segments.

Technology upgrades were also a focus, with new in-room TVs and improved connectivity enhancing convenience. These additions reflect the hotel's commitment to blending rustic charm with modern functionality.

Sustainability also played a central role in the renovation strategy. The Waters of Minocqua made intentional, thoughtful choices to align their renovation with eco-friendly practices. In the guest rooms, reclaimed wood was used extensively throughout furnishings and accents, contributing to the rustic ambiance while reducing the demand for new materials.

Energy-efficient LED lighting replaced outdated fixtures, reducing the property's carbon footprint while creating a warm, inviting glow. Other high-quality materials, such as granite countertops and durable flooring, were chosen not only for aesthetics and longevity but

also for their reduced environmental impact. These updates reflect the resort's commitment to sustainability and today's eco-conscious traveler.

Guest response to the renovations has been overwhelmingly positive, with frequent praise for the updated décor, refreshed bedding, and improved in-room technology. The design reflects the modern rustic trend that influenced the project and supports the hotel's efforts to create a comfortable, family-friendly environment with durable materials that hold up in high-traffic spaces.

The Waters of Minocqua worked with several contractors, including WHLA Associate Vendor Guest Supply, who supported guest room updates with key furnishings. When asked about the project, Guest Supply said,

"Guest Supply was excited to get the opportunity to be involved with this improvement project. We were able to work with The Waters of Minocqua to fulfill their needs for platform bed bases, new terry and linens. It was a great experience to help bring these pieces of their project together."

The Waters of Minocqua's transformation stands as a testament to thoughtful reinvestment — not only in facilities, but in the guest relationships that keep Wisconsin lodging strong year after year.





Expanding Capacity and Elevating Experience: Best Western Premier Bridgewood Resort Hotel & Conference Center

At A Glance:

- **Property location:** Neenah
- **Project summary:** Restaurant addition, Pool Resurfacing, Pool Mezzanine Expansion, Lobby Renovation, 39 New Guest Room Tower
- **Completion date:** 3/10/2025

With a clear vision to expand capacity and improve the guest experience, the Best Western Premier Bridgewood Resort Hotel & Conference Center in Neenah completed a transformational renovation across the property. The improvements included a 39-room guest tower, renovated lobby, pool upgrades, enhanced dining, and expanded event spaces.



One of the most ambitious aspects of the project was the construction of the Bridgewood North Tower, which brought 39 new guest rooms to the property along with a modern fitness center featuring a Peloton bike and a versatile meeting room for up to 40 attendees. This new addition significantly expands the property's lodging and event capabilities, accommodating larger groups while offering enhanced amenities.

The lobby and hallways were renovated with updated common areas, new workstations, and refreshed design elements that create a seamless first impression for guests. Renovations to the Aquatic Fun Center included resurfacing all four bodies of water and refreshing the six-foot slide. The pool mezzanine was also reimagined to include new seating areas and a renovated arcade with over 25 games, providing new entertainment options for families and groups.

To keep operations running during renovations, the team used strategic phasing and clear guest communication. Despite winter weather and construction noise, temporary signage and front desk coordination helped preserve access to key amenities.



The team also managed FF&E installation in-house — a demanding task during the winter season.

"We've done numerous renovation projects over the years, but handling the installation of all FF&E items ourselves for the Bridgewood North Tower addition was a new challenge," said Ryan Batley, General Manager. "It took significant effort from our dedicated engineering and house-keeping teams, along with specialized equipment for unloading, assembling, and disposing of packaging materials — especially during negative twenty-degree weather."

Their efforts ensured that the new tower opened on time, despite the operational challenges posed by the season and scope of work.

The property's refreshed and expanded spaces reflect a long-term investment in success — supporting business travelers, family vacations, and group events.



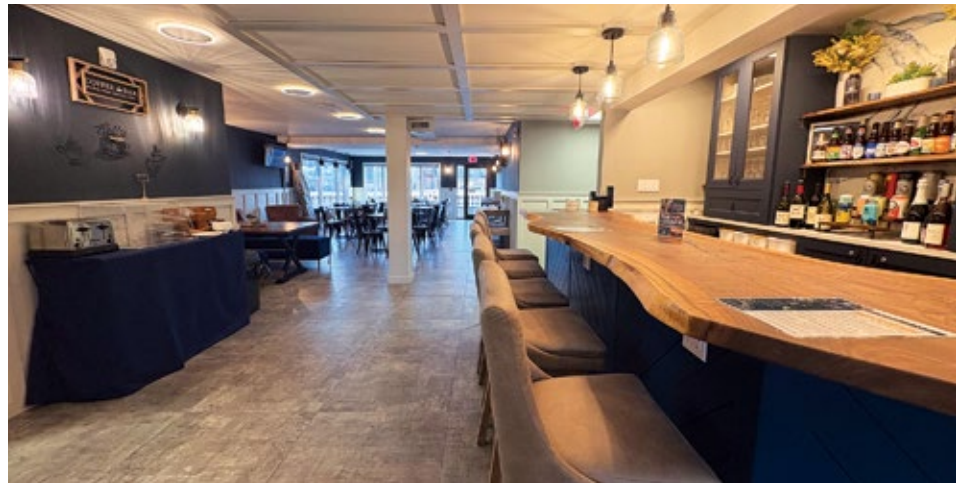
A Fresh Perspective on the Riverfront: Harbor Winds Hotel

At A Glance:

- **Property location:** Sheboygan
- **Project summary:** New bar/lounge space
- **Completion date:** 1/31/2025
- **WHLA Associate Vendor(s) used:** Stevens Equipment Supply

In the heart of Sheboygan, Harbor Winds Hotel transformed a portion of its property to enhance the guest experience in a bold and beautiful way. By reimagining the front desk space and converting a guest room, the hotel created a brand-new bar and lounge that opens up expansive views of the Sheboygan River. Completed in early 2025, the project reflects a desire to give guests more ways to relax, connect, and enjoy the natural beauty of the area.

The new space features custom-built elements that make a lasting impression, including a striking walnut bar top with deep blue resin and a live edge on both sides. A plush velvet banquette and thoughtful lighting choices elevate the ambiance, while the redesigned layout improves flow throughout the lobby and lounge area. This combination of comfort and character has helped turn The Lounge into a highlight of the guest experience.



"One of our favorite things is the view you now get all the way from the front desk to the Sheboygan River," said Monica Pfeifer. "It's an open and inviting space where guests can play games, eat breakfast, or just relax and take in the scenery."

Managing the renovation, however, came with its share of challenges. Remote coordination with the project manager created communication hurdles, and the hotel's team found themselves stepping in to manage more than expected. Despite the extra responsibility, the result exceeded expectations — and helped strengthen their internal team's capabilities.

Since opening The Lounge, Harbor Winds has received glowing feedback from both overnight guests and local residents. Guest surveys frequently mention the new space, praising its welcoming vibe and scenic setting.

The project included the support of WHLA Associate Vendor Member Stevens Equipment Supply, who provided PTAC units as part of the renovation. When asked about their involvement, Stevens Equipment Supply shared,

"We've worked with Luke Pfeifer on the Harbor Winds Hotel project to provide Amana PTAC Replacement units & our Eden Energy Management Thermostats," said Tom Hudy, Sr. Business Development Manager at Stevens Equipment Supply. "We've had a long working relationship with Luke & Adventure Hospitality on this property as well as at Maxwell Mansion."

"It's an open and inviting space where guests can play games, eat breakfast, or just relax and take in the scenery."

This small-scale renovation proves that even modest projects can have a powerful impact on guest satisfaction — and serve as a springboard for renewed connection between a property and its community.





A Legacy Reimagined: Grand Geneva Resort & Spa

At A Glance:

- **Property location:** Lake Geneva
- **Project summary:** Full refresh of guest rooms, lobby, and meeting and banquet spaces
- **Completion date:** 5/1/2024
- **WHLA Associate Vendor(s) used:** Tri-North Builders

To celebrate its 30th anniversary, Grand Geneva Resort & Spa launched a large-scale transformation to elevate its status as a premier Wisconsin destination. Completed in 2024, the project encompassed a full renovation of the resort's 358 guest rooms and suites, redesigned lobby and public areas, and a comprehensive refresh of its extensive meeting and event spaces — all with the goal of modernizing aesthetics and enhancing functionality for today's travelers and event organizers.

The renovation blends warm, contemporary aesthetics with modern functionality, creating an inviting environment that complements the resort's natural surroundings. Guests now enjoy upgraded AV systems and

connectivity — essential for modern events and leisure. Together, these upgrades demonstrate Grand Geneva's continued focus on innovation and hospitality excellence.

The resort's meeting and event spaces — spanning over 62,000 sq. ft. — also underwent a dramatic refresh. Five ballrooms, four boardrooms, pre-function areas, and public restrooms were reimagined with state-of-the-art audiovisual upgrades, flexible layouts, and modern design details. The result is a collection of versatile venues that support a wide range of gatherings — from intimate board meetings to large-scale conferences & weddings.

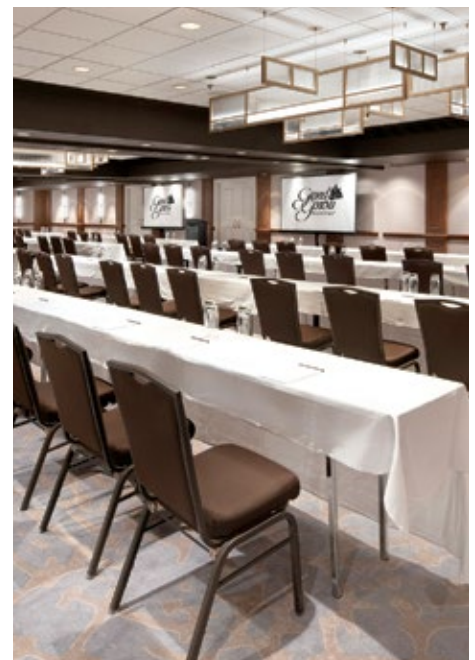
Lobby and foyer areas were redesigned with updated décor, improved flow, and seating that enhances first impressions and encourages relaxation. The project also included updates to Timber Ridge Lodge & Waterpark, with expanded swim areas and interactive attractions for families.

Guest feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with visitors highlighting the refreshed look, improved amenities, & elevated experience. Event planners and group coordinators have praised the flexible configurations and upgraded tech, which allow for seamless planning and memorable events.

Grand Geneva partnered with WHLA Associate Vendor Member Tri-North Builders to bring the vision to life.

"Tri-North is proud to have been a trusted construction partner for the award-winning Grand Geneva Resort & Spa since 1992. Our efforts have involved renovating almost every building on the resort's 1,300-acre property, where we are committed to effectively leveraging our preconstruction services and delivering quality craftsmanship to build environments that support the resort's dedication to gracious guest experiences," said Darren Noak, President of Tri-North's Commercial Division.

With a revitalized foundation and a future-focused design, Grand Geneva's investment ensures it remains a stand-out Wisconsin destination for both leisure and business travelers.



Looking Ahead: Innovation in Every Corner

These featured projects are just a glimpse into the remarkable work WHLA members are doing to improve, innovate, and inspire within Wisconsin's lodging industry. From guest room enhancements to major facility expansions, each renovation highlights a deep dedication to quality, guest satisfaction, and the future of hospitality in our state. The future of hospitality in Wisconsin is bright — and it's being built by WHLA members.

To explore more stories and see additional project spotlights, visit WisconsinLodging.org/news.

Have a project to share?

Submit yours at WisconsinLodging.org/property-improvement-submission.

This feature was developed by WHLA to spotlight member-led innovation in Wisconsin's lodging industry. Learn more at WisconsinLodging.org.



Thinking about your next upgrade?

Find trusted suppliers and service providers in the WHLA Products & Services Directory on page 25.

Hotel Performance Benchmarking



It's impossible to take advantage of an opportunity if you don't know it exists. As the industry's trusted provider of past, present, and future data solutions, STR empowers businesses to identify opportunity from every angle and make more informed decisions at the hotel and above-property levels.

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LAKEs, LODGES AND LUXURIES:

How RevPAG Creates New Opportunities for Seasonal Tourism

By Tim Hansen, VP, Sales Hotels and Resorts at Agilysys

The most profitable guest isn't always the one paying the highest room rate. This realization is shifting hospitality strategy from focusing solely on Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR) to capturing Revenue Per Available Guest (RevPAG) — a broader approach particularly valuable for properties dealing with seasonal fluctuations.

Wisconsin's tourism industry represents a massive economic opportunity, generating a record **\$25 billion impact in 2023**. However, the real potential lies in converting first-time visitors into loyal guests who spend more across all aspects of their experience. This is where RevPAG strategies become crucial.

Forward-thinking lodging businesses are discovering innovative approaches to enhance guest experiences and optimize revenue year-round. From picturesque summer lakeside destinations to winter getaways, properties that focus on the total guest value can create deeper relationships with visitors while building resilient revenue streams.

RevPAG opens exciting possibilities by revealing opportunities beyond the room itself — in dining, retail, and other amenities that enhance the guest experience while encouraging repeat visits across seasons.

From RevPAR to RevPAG: Expanding Revenue Horizons

This comprehensive approach aligns with what today's travelers seek: immersive, personalized experiences that extend beyond their accommodations. By focusing on each guest's total value and individual preferences, hospitality providers can uncover substantial revenue opportunities.

The Agilysys 2024 Global Hospitality Impact Study reveals that 82% of hospitality executives recognize RevPAG's potential to transform revenue strategies. With 72% of executives willing to enhance their technology infrastructure to gain RevPAG advantages, the industry is moving toward this guest-centric approach.

A Distinctive Regional Advantage

Destinations throughout the Midwest, especially Wisconsin, are perfectly positioned to leverage RevPAG strategies. The region's diverse seasonal offerings — summer water recreation, fall foliage, and winter activities — encourage guests to explore experiences beyond their accommodations.

Today's travelers increasingly seek flexible, experience-rich getaways. By

adopting RevPAG approaches, lodging businesses can capitalize on this trend in two ways. First, they can enhance current visits: a summer guest might receive personalized pre-arrival offers for kayak rentals, local vineyard tours, or exclusive dining experiences based on their booking history. Second, they can cultivate return visits: that same summer guest could receive tailored invitations highlighting autumn color tours or winter weekend packages that align with their demonstrated preferences. This creates year-round engagement while maximizing revenue from each guest relationship.

Practical RevPAG Strategies for Seasonal Markets

Transitioning to a RevPAG mindset offers immediate benefits while setting the foundation for long-term growth. Here are starting points for properties in seasonal tourism markets:

1. Develop Year-Round Experience Packages

Create signature offerings that showcase seasonal diversity. A lakeside resort might offer summer water sports packages, fall harvest experiences, winter comfort packages featuring local craft beverages, and spring wildlife viewing opportunities to highlight the unique character of every season.

2. Implement Cross-Selling Staff Training

Empower all guest-facing staff to become experience ambassadors. When front desk agents and housekeeping staff understand all available offerings, they can make personalized recommendations that enhance guest stays while driving additional revenue.

3. Create Flexible Activity Options

Design offerings to provide guests with choices. Activity credits that can be applied to various experiences allow guests to customize their stay while ensuring they engage with revenue-generating amenities.

4. Start Simple with Guest Preference Tracking

Begin collecting information about guest preferences and spending patterns. Simple systems tracking which amenities are most popular with different guest segments can inform future offerings and personalization efforts.

5. Forge Local Partnerships

Collaborate with area attractions, restaurants, and activity providers to create exclusive experiences for your guests. These partnerships extend revenue opportunities beyond property boundaries while providing guests with unforgettable local experiences they'll return for.

PMS as the RevPAG Enabler

At the heart of successful RevPAG implementation lies a property management system (PMS) that maintains a unified guest profile. This serves as the central nervous system for tracking guest activities and spending across every property touchpoint.

For Wisconsin's seasonal properties, this foundation is particularly valuable. With a complete view of each guest's preferences, properties can target pre-arrival offers while recognizing returning guests to deliver personalized experiences. This comprehensive approach also enables properties to identify which off-season amenities attract specific guest segments, helping balance year-round revenue streams.

The PMS serves as the backbone of the hotel. Staff move beyond standard hospitality to deliver memorable moments that resonate with guests, driving satisfaction and loyalty while

maintaining operational excellence across seasonal transitions.

As the RevPAG approach gains momentum, these unified guest profiles become increasingly valuable assets, enabling predictive capabilities that maximize each guest relationship's total value throughout Wisconsin's diverse seasonal landscape.

The "Crawl, Walk, Run" Approach to Implementation

The Agilysys study recommends a phased approach that allows hospitality businesses to build RevPAG capabilities at their own pace:

1. **Crawl:** Begin by assessing your current offerings and identifying opportunities to enhance guest experience. Start tracking total guest spend to uncover your most profitable guest segments and experiences.
2. **Walk:** Implement foundational systems that connect guest data across departments. Use this information to develop personalized service & targeted recommendations.
3. **Run:** Build toward sophisticated capabilities that maximize each guest's total value through predictive analytics and automated personalization.

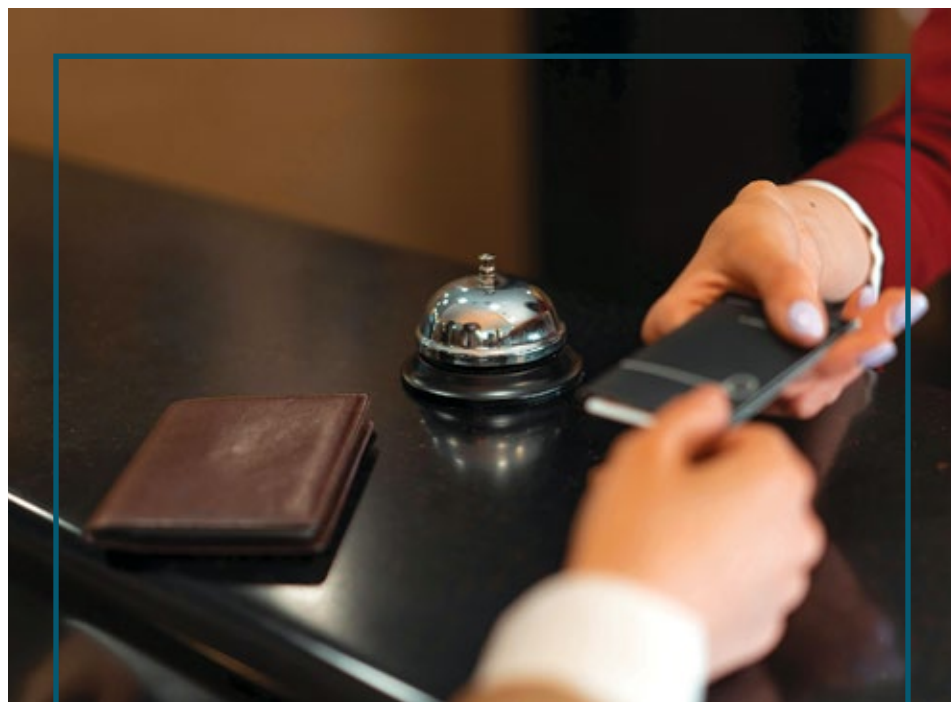
When considering technology investments to support RevPAG strategies, focus on solutions that deliver clear value. The Agilysys study found that 56% of hospitality executives feel they lack the technological infrastructure to fully implement RevPAG approaches — presenting an opportunity for forward-thinking operations to gain competitive advantage.

For smaller independent properties, cloud-based solutions with subscription pricing models can provide cost-effective entry points, aligning technology expenses with revenue patterns while delivering immediate benefits.

Creating Year-Round Appeal

By embracing RevPAG strategies, seasonal destinations can transform variability into year-round opportunity. Focusing on total guest value rather than just room revenue opens new possibilities for creating memorable experiences that keep guests returning throughout the year.

As guest preferences evolve toward experience-driven travel, RevPAG provides a framework for meeting these expectations while building sustainable business models. The future of hospitality lies in creating comprehensive guest experiences that maximize value for visitors and properties alike.





Your Building Deserves Love, Too!

By Shari Engstrom, Sid Grinker Restoration



Spring brings so many wonderful things: birds chirping, professional baseball, warm weather or the hope of it, and some other things, like your building to do list. After all, your building made it through another winter, & if you didn't have any issues, now is the time to prevent them.

Building maintenance is an ongoing process, but the melting snow and longer days tend to show all the effects of 4 months of salt and cold on a building. And that's just the part we can see! What else should be considered? No list is exhaustive, but let's look at a solid start hitting the highlights of building spring to do items:

1. Mechanical systems

Your HVAC system worked hard, and now is it's got a small break before air conditioning season. And in Wisconsin, we all know that could be next week. Contact your regular vendor and if you don't have one or don't love yours, now is the best time to cross this off your list with a regular inspection & any preventative maintenance.

2. Sprinkler systems and plumbing

Along with HVAC, take a look at sprinkler systems, and follow up on any plumbing issues from the previous winter as there always seems to have been at least one, and cold is especially trying on all pipes. Cracked pipes that may not have been noticed may result in mystery leaks that only occur at certain times. When possible, check guest rooms as small leaks from tubs or showers may not go noticed or reported, especially in a room with only one guest.

3. Inspect the roof and the roof drains

Flat roofs are especially susceptible to winter damage, and the roof drains tie into the sewer system so make sure everything is clear as heavy rains and debris are the perfect combination for sewer or other backups.

4. Attend to sump pumps and floor drains, too

After roof drains and sewer lines, floor drains, especially in parking garages love to collect debris. Sump pumps become unplugged, especially in winter for décor or heaters, or simply run out of life. A simple inspection will ensure these are in working order. In critical or essential areas, like electrical, consider a generator or battery back up for sump pumps or other appliances relying on power.

5. Trim trees and check landscaping

Fall cleanup often addresses overgrown shrubs but winter storms can disturb branches without fully taking them down. Be sure to take them down on your terms now before the next storm. Also, visit outdoor spaces that allow smoking and consider hardscapes or proper disposal containers so that new mulch doesn't act as kindling for a tossed cigarette. And finally, most ground water issues can be at least partially attributed to landscape. Look for proper grading, consider appropriate plantings, and overall give it a quick review.



The Delafield Hotel



Before



After

6. Revisit the basic appearance.

- Touch up painting is almost always a necessity with salt and shoveling over the winter.
- While most hotels maintain a clean appearance, hot washing by a specialty company can take off an extra layer of winter wear for minimal cost. This can refresh sidewalks, parking lots, entryways, and even parking garages.
- Don't forget the exterior signage that is often less protected from snow, salt, wind and of course, summer sun. This is the perfect time to update signage before the busy season.
- And give everything the once over checking for old birds' nests around light fixtures that provided a warm home over winter and cleaning out dryer vents as lint builds up.

April, May and June are a roller coaster of weather where we can be lucky enough to enjoy all four seasons in one week. This range of humidity and temperature is damaging inside and out, not to mention all the people behaviors inside. Our buildings work hard for us year-round and deserve to be well maintained in order to deliver the best for your guests and team. While difficult to find time for preventative maintenance, as with everything else, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

Cigarette in
Fresh Mulch



About the Author:

Shari Engstrom

Sid Grinker Restoration

For over a decade, Shari Engstrom has been the Director of Marketing & Business Development for Sid Grinker Restoration, though she far prefers the title Marketing Maven. Shari loves people, stories, and being out and about. Active on multiple charitable and industry boards, she hopes to see you at the next real estate, hospitality, senior living, or general fun event before she heads home to Muskego to see her husband and two teenager children. She travels as much time allows but for the most part, work, kids, the kids' sports and a little bit of exercise fill her days. Be sure to find her and Sid Grinker Restoration on LinkedIn!

Events

Events are core to the WHLA membership experience. Our events afford the opportunity to network, build relationships, and learn about the issues impacting the industry. The Wisconsin Hotel & Lodging Association has a proud tradition of providing the knowledge and resources lodging professionals need to be successful. Members have access to multiple avenues for education & professional development. Our board emphasizes moving the events to different areas of the state.

LODGING INNSIGHTS

Across the State

Lodging Insights

Lodging Insights is an award-winning live event series that was launched in January 2023. Each quarter, the leadership and members of WHLA gather at a different member hotel or lodging property for an afternoon of education, followed by dinner and an evening reception. Attending a Lodging Insights day is a great way to stay up-to-date with the latest trends and network with like-minded professionals in the industry.



Stars of the Industry Awards

The WHLA Stars of the Industry Awards recognize and celebrate exemplary performance and qualities that set the benchmark for the entire industry to strive towards. Awards are presented each fall to individuals who are making a difference in our organization and the Wisconsin lodging industry. Award categories include Spirit of Hospitality, Associate, Corporate Champion, Innkeeper, and Wisconsin Lodging Hall of Fame.



WHLA Action Day

WHLA Action Day provides Wisconsin hoteliers and industry supporters with an opportunity to not only hear an inside view on the latest proposals and plans impacting our industry at the state level of government, but also to meet afterward with your state elected officials or their key staff so that they can better understand the concerns of Wisconsin's lodging properties.

While the WHLA staff is always advocating for the industry in Madison, sharing your personal stories directly with legislators can be an incredibly constructive exercise. It provides essential context to the issues we lobby for, and since these legislators represent the same cities and towns as you, they are more likely to take note of your concerns.

WISCONSIN LODGING CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW

Wisconsin Lodging Conference & Trade Show

The Wisconsin Lodging Conference & Trade Show is our largest annual event, bringing together professionals in the hotel and hospitality industry. This event offers timely educational sessions and provides a platform for industry peers and suppliers to interact. Hoteliers, hospitality vendors, educators, and students come together for a period of just over two days to engage in the exchange of cutting-edge educational content.

The Conference schedule is designed to accommodate and educate lodging industry professionals with varying levels of expertise. The programming is hand-picked each year by our Education/Conference Committee volunteers to ensure that the content is both relevant and practical. At the Conference, attendees can learn from industry experts on a range of topics, including marketing, legal, leadership, human resources, sales, and more.

The Wisconsin Lodging Trade Show, held annually during the conference, is the state's only lodging-specific trade show. It is a premier destination for hotel and lodging owners to shop, learn, and connect with industry peers and suppliers. The event provides industry suppliers with a great opportunity to broaden their network. Attendees eagerly anticipate the Trade Show as it affords them the chance to connect with valued suppliers and learn about new products and services for their businesses. The Wisconsin Lodging Conference is a great platform to meet with industry peers, converse with experts, and forge lasting connections.

WisconsinLodging.org/events



2024 WHLA Highlights:

Advancing Our Industry, Empowering Our Members

Advocacy

WHLA continued to be the voice of Wisconsin's lodging industry at the Capitol, advocating on key issues impacting our members—from workforce and tourism funding to regulatory reform. Members had a seat at the table through Action Day at the Best Western Premier Park Hotel & Wisconsin State Capitol & ongoing legislative outreach.

Events

Our Lodging Insights series brought members together across the state for networking & local insights. Highlights included events at the Best Western Premier Bridgewood in Neenah, Gordon Lodge in Baileys Harbor, and American Family Field in Milwaukee. Every stop provided informative educational sessions and helped connect hoteliers with community leaders and their peers.

Education

The 2024 Wisconsin Lodging Conference & Trade Show welcomed the largest attendance since before the pandemic! Held November 3–5 at Kalahari Resort, the event featured 24+ educational sessions, 65+ vendors, and drew hotel professionals from every corner of the state.

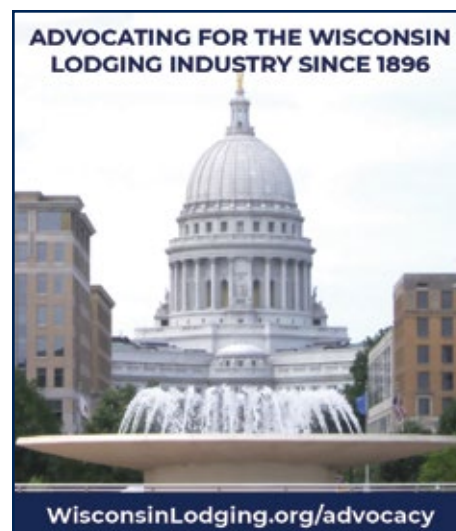


Member Engagement

Wisconsin Women in Lodging saw exciting growth in 2024, now 200+ members strong! Signature events like the summer Retreat at The Stella Hotel & Ballroom and the Nine & Wine gathering at Kalahari fostered connection, leadership, and inspiration. Founded in 2013, this group continues to empower women across Wisconsin's hospitality industry.

Marketing

WHLA helped members shine through powerful statewide marketing efforts. The Wisconsin Lodging Directory—in both print and digital formats—put members in front of travelers and featured a stunning cover shot of Delavan Lake Resort. Throughout the year, members also took advantage of targeted marketing opportunities to boost visibility and drive bookings.



Awards

In 2024, WHLA proudly honored outstanding individuals and organizations who elevate WI's lodging industry.

WHLA Awards Luncheon at American Family Field:

- **Hero of Hospitality Award:** Alex Gomez, Four Points Milwaukee Northshore
- **Spirit of Hospitality:** Jorge Alvarado, Home2 Suites Madison Central; Jennifer Anderson, Ironworks Hotel & Hotel Goodwin; Jose Ortega Aragon, DoubleTree Madison East; Joy McNeil, Sheraton Madison Hotel; Michelle Parlato, Tru by Hilton Madison West; Yvonne Port, Knickerbocker on the Lake Hotel; Irma Quintana, Holiday Inn Express Fond du Lac; Robert Sterling, Four Points by Sheraton Milwaukee North Shore; Stephanie Swain, Gordon Lodge; Pedro Vega, DoubleTree Milwaukee Downtown; Tommie Ware, The Edgewater Madison; Cayla Young, Chula Vista Resort
- **Wisconsin Lodging Hall of Fame Class of 2025:** Richard Batley, A. Scott Faulkner, Steve Magnuson
- **Key to Hospitality Awards:** Representative Joel Kichens, Senator Joan Bellwig, Governor Tony Evers

WHLA Awards Dinner at the Wisconsin Lodging Conference:

- **Educator of the Year:** Jay Jones, University of Wisconsin–Stout
- **Development Excellence Award:** The Trade Hotel Milwaukee
- **Associate of the Year:** Cindy Lapidakis, Royal Basket Trucks
- **Corporate Champion of the Year:** Amy Supple, The Edgewater
- **Innkeeper of the Year:** Larry Robe, Knickerbocker on the Lake Hotel

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- Luke Derheim, Craft & Crew Hospitality



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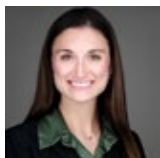
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