



## Hotel Industry Movers & Shakers

### Kristen Churlonis

Digital Marketing Manager • Menin Hospitality

With her diverse career experience, Kristen Churlonis came to hotel marketing unburdened by preconceptions. But throughout her career, she's known that it's all about the people.

"It's important that we build relationships with our guests no matter how many times they've visited or how long they're staying," she says.

As digital marketing manager for Menin Hospitality, she's responsible for marketing and communications for 15 properties, including not only hotels like the iconic Mondrian South Beach, but also restaurants and nightlife venues. Each maintains its own brand while benefitting from Menin's marketing clout.

There's something for everyone from this brand, which caters to locals as well as tourists and offers spas, casual dining, bars, and boutique hotels as well as larger destination hotels. A wealth of experience Kristen's work has taken her across the country and across industries. She began her career in the catering department of the Laguna Cliffs Marriott Resort & Spa in southern California,

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working at several hotels and event planning companies before being lured to New York City to work as an associate producer for Penguin Random House.

Menin Hospitality offered her the chance to return to hospitality while using her extensive digital marketing skills. Working with a team of five, her job is to keep building relationships with guests and potential guests in person as well as digitally. With a focus on guest retention, the

team keeps websites up-to-date while creating ad campaigns and email.

The digital marketing team is relentless about tracking the results of campaigns, whether that's an email campaign or an online promotion. Reports that provide information about metrics such as email open rates are essential. But even more important, according to Kristen, is segmentation of the guest database in order to reach the right groups with quality content.

## Reporting perfected

Menin Hospitality uses the Revinat Marketing platform its hotel properties, including The Mondrian South Beach, Shelborne South Beach, and the Bentley Hotel.

The platform allows something unique: the ability to directly attribute revenue to marketing campaigns. This functionality lets the digital marketing team understand exactly which of their activities are driving the most bookings.

This also helps track Menin's cross-promotional activities. For example, members of the Menin Hospitality Perks program can get free chips and

guacamole at the Bodega. Guests staying at a property without beach access can be offered a visit to the Shelborne South Beach.

## Segmentation 2.0

Kristen and her team constantly expand their digital marketing tactics in this fast-paced environment. She's taking advantage of Revinat's ability to segment guests, allowing them to identify the most loyal guests and produce targeted campaigns such as a "We miss you" email to those who haven't stayed at the property recently.

The variety of campaigns also includes pre-stay upsells inviting guests to purchase discounted amenities and upgrade their room selection at 50% off, seasonal and holiday promotions segmented to target guests who had stayed at any of the group's five South Beach Hotels, and weekend guest experience eblasts segmented to guests of the hotels staying or arriving on property that weekend.

Two important guest segments that the team has identified are highly-engaged on-property guests and loyal guests. With Revinat's new group functionality, Kristen can segment both on a group level as well as on an individual hotel level. "I love the upgraded segmentation functionality within the platform."

Those highly engaged guests receive an email detailing what's happening at the hotel during their stay, as well as local South Beach events and happenings. The idea is to provide a well-rounded Miami experience to the guest by taking advantage of the Menin Perks at all their properties in Miami.

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Those in the loyal guest segment get “secret email” promotions. These are carefully crafted and individualized for guests to create an air of exclusivity.

“Because the industry is spread so thin, it’s really important to reach our customers in the right way by discovering the best channels and platforms,” Kristen says.

But equally important, she believes, is for hotel marketers to find their own voices. In this media-saturated industry, “You really have to know who you are as a brand,” she says.

## Marketing must-dos

Kristen offers these ideas to enhance that all-important, direct relationship with guests:

1. Be strategic in your marketing. Each brand and/or property should have a strong, unique, and consistent personality. Each campaign should have a clear goal.
2. Continually work to differentiate your properties. In this highly competitive industry, no hotelier can afford to snooze.
3. Stay in touch with guests. Maintaining relationships with guests and prospects is critical. Ideally, you should have specific messages for people at every stage.
4. Choose marketing channels wisely. Menin Hospitality has found email marketing and direct messaging on Instagram to be the most successful. It also uses Facebook ads targeted to the local market. It’s important to constantly test different channels to find those that deliver the best return on investment and then focus on those.

*Revinate Heroes is a series of articles profiling successful hoteliers who are moving the hospitality industry into the future.*