

# Profile: SPM Resorts

*Editors note: This article is another in the series in which advertisers provide information about their history and services available to timeshare owners and their resorts.*

Like many management companies, SPM Resorts had its beginning developing timeshare resorts. Then the company management and staff realized that they really enjoyed working with the timeshare owners. They recognized early on that the needs and desires of the timeshare owners were constantly changing and they wanted their company to be the vehicle to expedite the owners desires for their vacation homes. Besides, working with owners and Boards of Directors to create an environment for a great vacation experience was a lot of fun.

Originally named Southern Property Management to embody management that provided Southern Hospitality, the name was shortened to SPM Resorts, when some resort owners commented that they thought the company only provided services in the south. SPM Resorts now manages properties as far North as Maine and as far South as the Virgin Islands and West to Tennessee, and is looking to expand as far West as California and Hawaii.

A prominent complaint from Boards is that their management company is more interested in the branding of the resort and maintaining company-set standards than meeting the particular needs and desires of the owners at a resort. Michael Schraibman, Chairman and CEO of SPM, states that "We work for the owners and report to the Board." SPM follows the philosophy that the resort belongs to the owners, not the management company, and that SPM's function is to maintain and operate the resort in the best interest of the owners as determined through their elected Board of Directors.

Bill Young, President and COO of SPM, says that when they have taken over management, they often find policies and procedures more appropriate for hotels than for timeshare resorts. Bill says it is important to remember that the people coming to check in are not guests; they are the owners. Often, removing hotel type policies and procedures streamline operations and also cuts administrative ex-

penses while providing a better vacation experience for the owners.

SPM advocates that no resort can operate efficiently or effectively unless it is financially sound, and the best way for that to be achieved is by having the Board and interested owners well informed. Andy Thompson, CFO, believes that each Association's budget and monthly financial statement should be tailored to that resort's operation not a standardized template. Additionally, the financials should be in enough detail that the Board has the necessary information to monitor income and expenses. Bill Young reports that SPM's cash flow reports provide Boards with the necessary information in sufficient time to permit resorts to avoid year end cash deficits or allow the Board to make good use of surplus funds, depending on their situation.

Peter Gianini, Senior Vice President of operations, promotes an open and free flowing dialogue with the owners and Board Members. Peter says "We will discuss with the Board what we believe and we will present, strongly sometimes, our recommendations on a subject, but we never forget that it is not our property. It is the property of the individual owners; the ultimate decision as to what is best for a resort is in the hands of the elected Board of Directors." Peter lets his managers know that the Board members and owners bring a wealth of information and ideas to a resort that no one Manager could possibly be expected to know, and that welcoming ideas and suggestions is a valued quality and the mark of a good manager.

A significant philosophy that SPM follows is that the company will only prosper if the employees prosper say Karen Middleton, HR Director. Karen says that SPM has put together a strong benefits program for the staff because they need to feel that they are cared for and that the company wants them to prosper. To this end, SPM has training programs for the staff and encourages the staff to move into new positions as the company grows with new resorts.

In addition to its management program, SPM's sister company, Palmetto Marketing can provide a resale program at the resorts managed by SPM. Paul

Goodrich, Palmetto Marketing President, says that they have been very successful at providing owners who no longer can use their timeshare week with a venue in which they can sell their interest for a fair price without having to pay upfront fees or lose use of the unit. Paul says one of the most significant results for the Association is that maintenance fees delinquencies drop because units are transferred from those who are not using them to those who can use the unit and are willing to pay their fees.

SPM points with pride to the various resorts for which it has assumed management responsibility over the years now showing increasing scores on owner comment cards and decreasing delinquency rates. Michael Schraibman and Bill Young sum up the company's success saying "What we do is not difficult; we just focus on doing what is best for the owners and listen to what they say they want and act on it."

SPM's corporate headquarters are in Myrtle Beach with regional offices in Orlando, Hilton Head, and Cape Cod. They can be reached at 843 238 5000 or at 407 253 1789. or on the web at [spmresorts.com](http://spmresorts.com).

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