Kaity Conner – Jacob Corrigan – Isaiah Griffin
Kaitor Kposowa – Bradley W. Parks
The Challenge

• Desired
  • Tailored content
  • Community engagement
University of Akron to take remaining public rooms at Quaker Square Inn

By David Bilicky
Beacon Journal staff report

Published: March 29, 2013 - 10:55 PM Updated: March 27, 2013 - 12:33 PM

The University of Akron said Wednesday that it would convert the Quaker Square Inn — the campus-owned hotel in downtown Akron — to all-student housing this summer.

Ted Curtis, UA vice president for capital planning and facilities management, said the university decided to close the Quaker Square Inn because it didn’t generate enough revenue to continue operations.

"The Quaker Square Inn will be completely converted to student housing," Curtis said.

"The university is a leader in the state in utilizing our facilities for student residence," Curtis said. "We feel that the university has a responsibility to our students to provide them with the best possible facilities and services, and we feel that the Quaker Square Inn is the best way to do that."
University of Akron to take remaining public rooms at Quaker Square Inn

By Carol Biliczky
Beacon Journal staff report

Published: March 26, 2013 - 10:25 PM | Updated: March 27, 2013 - 12:23 PM

The University of Akron said Wednesday it will convert Quaker Square Inn — the campus-owned hotel in downtown Akron — to all-student housing this summer.

Ted Curtis, UA vice president for capital planning and facilities management, said the occupancy rate for the Quaker Square Inn has been low because it doesn’t boast a marquee name or use a national reservation system.

City officials said the loss of the Quaker Square Inn to the public was a blow but not the end of the world. They say this ups the ante on the need for a new hotel downtown.

“Right now, any loss of rooms creates a problem,” said Bob Bowman, Akron’s deputy mayor of economic development.

“I don’t know that it is a crisis. The market has adjusted and gone out to the suburbs to get rooms,” he said. “What it does is [it] limits the capabilities with the convention center and activities downtown.”
systems to installing student furniture to securing balcony windows for another 100 students starting next fall.

That will bring the number of students at Quaker Square to about 360, the university said. However, housing is no longer the hot-button issue that it once was at the university.

Every two years or so, UA has been opening a new residence hall as it sought to become more of a residential campus. Its newest, South Hall, opened in September for 500 students.

At the same time, private developers have built three apartment complexes around campus and two more, including one on property formerly owned by the Akron Beacon Journal, are in progress.

The boom in construction is meeting the demand, said John Messina, assistant vice president for student engagement and success and also chief housing officer.

He said last fall was the first time since he joined UA in 2004 that the university could accommodate every request for housing. Today, about 3,300 students are housed in UA residence halls.

In the meantime, UA has been looking at the future of older residence halls, such as Gallucci — a former Holiday Inn — and Grant as it considers a new master plan for campus, Curtis said. No decisions have been made, but the consultant, Sasaki Associates, recommended closing Quaker Square to the public.

The conversion of Quaker Square will leave the aging Akron City Centre Hotel, a former Radisson, as the only downtown hotel.

Beacon Journal staff writer Stephanie Warsmith contributed to this report. Carol Biliczky can be reached at cbiliczky@thebeaconjournal.com or 330-996-3729.
systems to installing student furniture to securing balcony windows for another 100 students starting next fall.

That will bring the number of students at Quaker Square to about 360, the university said. However, housing is no longer the hot-button issue that it once was at the university.

Every two years or so, UA has been opening a new residence hall as it sought to become more of a residential campus. Its newest, South Hall, opened in September for 500 students.

At the same time, private developers have built three apartment complexes around campus and two more, including one on property formerly owned by the Akron Beacon Journal, are in progress.

The boom in construction is meeting the demand, said John Messina, assistant vice president for student engagement and success and also chief housing officer.

He said last fall was the first time since he joined UA in 2004 that the university could accommodate every request for housing. Today, about 3,300 students are housed in UA residence halls.

In the meantime, UA has been looking at the future of older residence halls, such as Gallucci — a former Holiday Inn — and Grant as it considers a new master plan for campus, Curtis said. No decisions have been made, but the consultant, Sasaki Associates, recommended closing Quaker Square to the public.

The conversion of Quaker Square will leave the aging Akron City Centre Hotel, a former Radisson, as the only downtown hotel.

Beacon Journal staff writer Stephanie Warsmith contributed to this report. Carol Biliczky can be reached at cbiliczky@thebeaconjournal.com or 330-996-3729.
Facebook

- Facebook Connect
- Graph API
- Social Plugins
Facebook

• The Akron Beacon Journal’s current Facebook presence
  • 12,300+ likes
  • February 2013 (average, per post)
    • 4.9 likes
    • 3.1 comments
    • 1.1 shares
Facebook

• After three months
  • 10 likes, 6 comments, 2 shares per post
• After one year...
  • 20 likes, 12 comments, 4 shares per post
YouTube Live

- Promote community engagement
- Stimulate conversation
  - Reader communities
  - Newsroom and community
Virtual Town Hall

- YouTube Live Streaming
- Embed live streaming video on Ohio.com
- Facebook comments via social plug-in placed below
- People submit questions and comments and “hosts” answer

Conner answers your questions about new downtown hotel
Conner answers your questions about new downtown hotel
Profitability

- Advertising
- Local
- Tailored
- Personalized
Cost

- Facebook Connect and YouTube Live Streaming are free services
- Budget
  - Coding Incentives
  - Overtime and catering for launch events
Conclusion

• Facebook answers both parts of the challenge.
• Tailored content
• Community engagement
• Virtual town halls take discussion to the next level.
• Brings online conversation to life