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Sports Business

After a global career in hospitality, this exec is loving Buffalo



Adrian Dishington, COO, Delaware North's Sportservice division

ADRIAN DISHINGTON



By [Lian Bunny](#) – Reporter, Buffalo Business First
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Story Highlights

- Adrian Dishington became COO of Delaware North's Sportservice division in December.
- Dishington brings over 20 years of sports hospitality experience to Buffalo.
- So far, he's loving what Delaware North and Buffalo have to offer.

Adrian Dishington grew up in the hospitality business just outside St. Andrews in Scotland. His mom owned the Balcomie Links, next to the Crail golf course.

He remembers washing the bathrooms at 8 years old after a bustling Saturday night at the hotel. It was his punishment for scratching the family's car with his bike.

After studying hospitality management at the University of Dundee, also in Scotland, Dishington had a choice to make. Would he take over the family business, or carve his own path in the hospitality industry?

He opted for the latter, which has led to a 20-plus-years career in food and beverage operations across the sports and entertainment industry. He spent about a decade in the cruise industry, working for months at a time from huge ships all around the world. His journey has also taken him to cities including Los Angeles to Denali National Park and Preserve in Alaska to Seattle.

Most recently, he moved from the West Coast to Buffalo in December after being named [chief operating officer](#) for [Delaware North's](#) Sportservice division.

"The great thing about moving to Buffalo, for me, is I'm in the middle of the organization," he said. "We can make change, we can do it quickly, we've got the buy-in, and so far this has been a great place to live."

Why it matters: *Buffalo's business community and economy benefit from seasoned professionals with global experience and perspectives moving to the*

Queen City. Leaders like Dishington bring decades of knowledge to the region's largest private companies and huge employers.

[Delaware North](#) is a \$4.4 billion Buffalo-based hospitality and entertainment firm. The Sportservice division oversees food beverage and retail operations that generate more than \$1 billion in combined annual revenue.

During his time in the cruise industry, Dishington's career opportunities have spanned being part of new build teams putting together cruise ships in northern Italy and Japan to being corporate beverage operator in Los Angeles.

Realizing at then 26 that the 9-5 life wasn't for him, he worked in hotels and then joined [Aramark](#), where he got into the sports industry and was responsible for food and beverage operations at Angel Stadium in Anaheim. Since then, he's chosen to stay in the sports hospitality world.

"You can't beat it," he said. "There's just something about sports rivalry. It's unreplaceable. ... I've had opportunities to go into other lines of business, but it just never excited me as this one does."

His work in the industry led to his crossing paths with Delaware North. As vice president of hospitality and retail at Climate Pledge Arena in Seattle, he was a client of the Buffalo firm and got to know the Jacobs family and several executives.

A few years later, he was serving as vice president of operations with Levy Restaurants in northern California and the Pacific Northwest, overseeing venues including Levi's Stadium, Chase Center, Moda Center and Lumen Field. That's when he saw the Delaware North job opportunity.

The COO role with Delaware North's division appealed to him because of the company's reputation in the industry and the family business's ability to make decisions quicker than a traditional corporate America business, he said.

Dishington was fine with moving to Buffalo for the role, and he and his wife were even more on board after a visit in fall 2025. They've since bought and moved into a home in Clarence.

"You've got no traffic," he said. "I love the architecture of the city. Everybody talks to you."

Dishington likes things in Buffalo so far. He's found the owners of Delaware North to be accessible, and he still gets to travel for his job – just from his Buffalo base.

"I've always taken a little risk," he said. "I've always said to people who asked for advice that you've got to take the risk... I believe there's a path. I think it's going to happen for you, and just put the effort in and enjoy it and give it everything you've got."