Making Functions Work for You and Your Site

Bill Blanchfield
Functions Manager
Historic New England
Waltham, MA
“We don't rent for anything...ever.”

“The first thing I do is try to discourage them from hosting their wedding here”

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A always
B be
C closing

We're not here to make friends.
We're not savin' the manatees, guys.
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Launching or re-launching a functions program

Who

Why

What

Where

Competition

Numbers

Growth
Maximize income earned through the rental of specified buildings and grounds while working within Historic New England’s preservation philosophy and practices.
Functions at Historic New England

What is a function

- Images of outdoor events at Historic New England
- "LINIMBERG PHOTOGRAPHY" watermark
Functions at Historic New England
Launching or re-launching a functions program

Who

1. LEADERSHIP
2. FUNCTIONS TEAM
3. INTERNAL SUPPORT STAFF
4. VENDORS
Launching
or
re-launching a functions program

Who Too

The Town
The Neighbors
Launching or re-launching a functions program

What
What about...all the stuff?
Pricing

- Identify competition
- Be aggressive to start
- Adjust toward your goal price as you become more confident in your offering
Pricing points

• Pricing can be used to control / limit interest

• The fee is not tax deductible

• Keep pricing simple and put it everywhere!
Simple plan to get the word out

- Have great material

Weddings at Barrett House

Barrett House, also known as Forest Hall, was built c. 1800 by Charles Barrett Sr. for his son Charles Jr. and daughter-in-law Martha Minot on the occasion of their marriage. The mansion sits on more than seventy acres that include perennial and annual gardens and a Gothic Revival summer house that crowns the hillside overlooking the expansive grounds. The dramatic sweep of the house and gardens make this place...
Simple plan to get the word out

- Have great material
- Have a clear and concise web page

Governor John Langdon House Gardens

At the end of the nineteenth century, Langdon descendants purchased the house and restored it to its eighteenth-century glory. The handsome garden, dating from the same era, features restored perennials, a rose and grape arbor, and a pavilion.
Simple plan to get the word out

- Have great material
- Have a clear and concise web page
- Maximize the free-ness available on the web
Simple plan to get the word out

• Have great material
• Have a clear and concise web page
• Maximize the free-ness available on the web
• Step up to for-pay listings when you want more
Caterers and tent rental companies must be chosen from our exclusive list. These companies work superbly at the Codman Carriage House and Gardens and their clients have been particularly pleased.

Caterers
Boston Café and Catering
781-918-9900
BostonCater.com
Capers Catering
781-279-5100
CapersCatering.com
Chive Sustainable Catering
978-969-3316
ChiveEvents.com

Cuisine Chez Vous
617-363-3680
CuisineChezVous.com
East Meets West Catering
617-269-2662 ext. 11
EastMeetsWestCatering.com
Events by BH
781-968-5495
EventsByBH.com

Rita's Catering
617-389-1601
RitasCatering.com
Swarz Catering Company
617-628-1632
SwarzCatering.com
Tastings Caterers
508-879-9191
TastingsCaterers.com

Tents
Peterson Party Center
781-759-4000
PPCInc.com

The following vendors are suggested. Clients are not required to use them.

DJ's/Entertainment
A Beat Away Entertainment featuring DJ Joe Pelt
617-813-1999

C-Zone Music Elegant Entertainment
617-320-0723

Murray Hill Talent
800-843-2263

Florists
Land Escapes Floral Design
617-308-7063

Hotels
Courtyard Boston Waltham
781-419-0900

Holiday Inn Express Boston-Waltham
866-335-6298

Home Suites Inn
781-890-3000

Liquor Suppliers
Gordon's Fine Wines & Liquors
781-893-1900

Music/Bands
Intermezzo Chamber Players
781-861-7149

Riverview Chamber Players
781-398-2240

White Heat Swing Orchestra and Back Bay Rhythm Makers
617-354-7213

Photographers
Robert Castagna
617-833-9271

Paula Chandoha
617-661-2998

Cordele Photography
978-771-0341

Alyssa Almeida-Duncan Photography
603-373-0098

Leise Jones Photography
617-671-5572

Beth Oram Photography
774-249-0565

Anne Reaick Photography
978-282-5574
Vendors can be an additional source of revenue and/or institutional support.
In 1999, a drunk Giants fan crashed his car into another carrying Antonia Verni, 2, leaving her a quadriplegic. Verni's parents sued Aramark Corp., saying that a company employee kept serving beer to the drunk fan, Daniel Lanzaro, and contributed to the crash.
common sense suggestions

• Limit service length to 4 hours
• No shots
• Police presence
• Do not send alcohol home with anyone after the event…not even a “responsible adult”
• No last call
• Have a secure place to store alcohol
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contract creation</th>
<th>Cleaning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Create a client contract that is hyper specific and protective of your organization</td>
<td>• Hire a professional BUT don’t charge the client explicitly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create a vendor contract that sets clear expectations</td>
<td></td>
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Additional details to consider

- Internal space needs
  - Set aside dates for internal use
  - Annual events should be put in the calendar in perpetuity

- Membership
  - Give them a membership don’t require the to be members before booking with you
**Slow and steady**
- Book more!
- Raise prices
- Extract fees from vendors
- Go bigger
- Add a new type of event

**Swing for the fences**
- Spartan Race
- Movie shoots
- Build an ice rink
In business you get what you want by giving other people what they want.

Alice Foote MacDougall (1867-1945), U.S. businesswoman. MacDougall was a successful coffee house proprietor and coffee, tea, and cocoa merchant.