

## 2013 Season Statistics

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### BOOKINGS

Bookings this season were up modestly from last year.

	<i>Cape Cod</i>	<i>Martha's Vineyard</i>	<i>Nantucket</i>
<b>Season to date vs. 2012</b>	+1.5%	+2.4%	+2.1%
<b>Summer 10 weeks vs. 2012</b>	+1.8%	+0.3%	-0.1%
<b>Fall to date vs. 2012</b>	+5.5%	+9.6%	+11.6%

### RENTAL RATES

- Cape owners increased their 2013 prices 2.2% or \$58 per week; Vineyard owners also went up 3.3% or \$111; and Nantucket owners went up 1.9% or \$88 per week.
- Average prices are now: Cape: \$2,585; MV: \$3,430; Nantucket: \$4,751.

### MISCELLANEOUS STATISTICS

- In height of the season with 3500 listings, 2/3 of our listings are year-round listings.
- 460 Last-Minute Availability Alerts were purchased during the summer 2013
  - Properties received a 61% increase in email inquiries and 36% increase in property views with alert vs. 2 weeks prior to the alert week.
  - Based upon a recent survey of Homeowners who used the alert, 50% responded that it resulted in at least 1 booking.

## Marketing Efforts on Cape Cod, Nantucket & Martha's Vineyard - 2013

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### 1. Press and Public Relations

Known as local Cape and Islands experts, WeNedaVacation.com has been featured on [Chronicle](#), the award-winning evening magazine show on Boston's Channel 5, WCVB-TV. We have also been featured in the *Cape Cod Times*, *Cape & Plymouth Business* magazine, *Vineyard Gazette*, *Barnstable Patriot*, *Patriot Ledger*, *CapeCodToday.com*, *Boston Globe*, *Boston Herald*, *Boston Business Journal*, *The New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and *Coastal Living*. We have been quoted often on National Public Radio (NPR) and have appeared in TV news reports for CNBC, WCVB-TV Channel 5, WBZ CBS Channel 4, and NECN (the New England Cable Network).

### 2. Connecting with Vacationers

- Our Vacation Planner provides vacationers with ideas for restaurants, shops, and activities such as boat tours, biking, and kayaking. The more vacationers know about the many possibilities in your area, the more likely they are to want to book your home!
- The beach directory offers images and information of all Cape and Islands beaches. Beach lovers are encouraged to write beach reviews with helpful information.
- There is a popular Events calendar with hundreds of local festivals, parades, theatre, road races, etc. throughout the Cape & Islands. Events may be searched by town and date.
- The Reviews feature invites people to write a review of the local businesses.
- The Vacation Planner also includes articles specific to vacationing on the Cape & Islands We have published over 60 articles!
- We email a monthly Vacationer Newsletter to 75,000+ vacationers who have used our site in the past. The newsletter includes interesting articles and a link to the Vacation Planner as well as a BIG push for vacation rentals!

### 3. Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

SEO is the name for the half-science, half-art of achieving top rankings in key search engines. Search engines determine and rank their results by many factors, which are: a.) not documented anywhere, at least officially, and b.) change all the time as they tweak their extremely sophisticated software, all with the goal of returning the most relevant results. We work with a talented SEO company, which follows Google's every move and helps us make the necessary changes to our web pages to maintain top rankings. We have consistently been on page 1 (the top 10) for virtually all important search phrases.

### 4. Social Marketing

It is increasingly important to participate in social media. This powerful marketing strategy is free and we spend hours every week promoting our site, your listings, and informational content on several social media sites.

WeNedaVacation.com began promoting our site on Facebook and Twitter in 2009. We currently have 720+ Likes (followers) on our Facebook Homeowner Page, *WeNedaVacation.com*, and 2300+ Likes on our Vacationer Page, *Cape Cod and Islands Vacations*. Facebook is one of the leading referral sites for web traffic to [wenedavacation.com](#)!

\* Do you participate on Facebook or Twitter? If so, please "like" our Homeowner Page, *WeNedaVacation.com* or twitter handle @wenedavacation. This is a great place to receive blog updates,

Cape Cod news, and site information from us as well as discuss with other homeowners aspects of the rental business.

\* Post the link of your vacation rental on your personal Facebook Wall or Twitter page. Need help? Contact [Becky@weneedavacation.com](mailto:Becky@weneedavacation.com).

\* Our YouTube channel hosts over 50 videos of Cape Cod towns and rental listings. Visit *Cape Cod & Islands Vacations - WeNeedaVacation.com* on YouTube and subscribe to our channel. Better yet, be in touch with [Becky@weneedavacation.com](mailto:Becky@weneedavacation.com) to add your property video to our channel.

\* Pinning on Pinterest? Have you discovered this fun, visual new social media site? Full of thousands of excellent pictures, Pinterest focuses on all things beautiful. Our Pinterest presence has sent impressive traffic to our website. Visit our boards that include Lighthouses, Events, Cape Cod Weddings, Favorite Beaches, Coastal Gardens, etc. We currently have published nearly 60 boards and have 1200 followers.

\* LinkedIn – If you are on LinkedIn, please connect with the staff and look for our WeNeedaVacation.com company page.

## **5. Chamber Memberships**

WNAV is a member of 17 Chambers of Commerce throughout the Cape, South Shore, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. Benefits include advertising on their websites and Guidebooks and receiving monthly updates from each Chamber about the important issues, events, and businesses in each town. We attend Chamber networking meetings each month to promote WeNeedaVacation.com and learn about our Cape and Islands colleagues. Relationship building throughout the local communities is an invaluable strategy in supporting our leading referral source – word of mouth.

WeNeedaVacation.com has sponsored many Chamber events in the last few years including the Orleans 4th of July Parade, Brewster in Bloom, Canal Christmas, Brewster Town Holiday Tree, Christmas in Orleans, Eastham Golf Tournament, Yarmouth Summer Celebration, Fall for Harwich, and Dennis Chamber Golf Tournament. In the last two summers, we have also distributed over 25,000 Frisbees with our logo and thousands of free postcards.

## **6. Local Expos**

In the last few years, WeNeedaVacation.com has exhibited at several local Expos, including Plymouth Business Expo 2009 & 2010, and the Lower Cape Business Expo 2009 – 2013.

## **7. Cape Abilities**

For the past five years, we have partnered with the nonprofit organization Cape Abilities to distribute nearly 5,200 of their “Welcome to Cape Cod Buckets.” Cape Abilities provides employment to Cape residents with disabilities to fill over 30,000 beach buckets with snacks, maps, beach toys, coupons, restaurant guides, and other goodies. This is a win-win-win, so please consider purchasing buckets. See the icon on your Homeowner Center for more information.

## **8. Lawn Signs**

Many of you have taken advantage of our attractive lawn signs and have already received inquiries as a result. In addition, our signs serve to advance recognition of the WeNeedaVacation.com name and our presence on the Cape and Islands. We have distributed hundreds of signs each year since 2009.

## **9. Radio**

In the spring of 2013, we participated in a 2 month ad campaign on WCAI, the local Cape & Islands NPR station. While difficult to measure, we received much feedback and recognition from the ads. Goal – Invite people to list and rent vacation rentals.

## Improve your rental business



### Photography

### Video

### Consultation

Create a strong first impression with bright, clear pictures

Showcase and enhance the strengths of your property with dynamic video

Benefit from insights and recommendations by a professional

Give your property the competitive edge

Respond to the growing demand from vacationers for more and better multimedia

Proven success stories from delighted homeowners



The photography, video and consultation services may be combined for a reduced price.

Please contact Becky Fischer for more information and a free quote.

[Becky@WeNeedaVacation.com](mailto:Becky@WeNeedaVacation.com) 508.785.5484



# 5 Tips to Capture “The Big Picture” When Advertising Your Rental Property

[blog.weneedavacation.com/2012/04/25/5-tips-to-capture-the-big-picture-when-advertising-your-rental-property/](http://blog.weneedavacation.com/2012/04/25/5-tips-to-capture-the-big-picture-when-advertising-your-rental-property/)

Becky Fischer

We repeatedly encourage homeowners to improve their pictures. Pictures are not only the first impression of a property listing, but according to vacationers – the most important impression. As testimonials and data suggests: better pictures lead to better bookings. Really! Sometimes we feel like a broken record.

So, how can we help you achieve bright, inviting pictures that really will make you more money? Here are 5 suggestions:

1. **Think summer, even in November.** Turn on the lights in your rental. So simple and so effective. Suddenly a room looks and feels brighter. Please do not take pictures at night or when it is snowing. Buy fresh flowers that look summery.



Kitchen – Proper lighting



Kitchen – Poor Lighting

2. **Focus on making a picture pretty, not all-inclusive.** I feel it is better to have a pretty picture of part of the room, than a picture of door jams with all of the room. Use the caption to explain the room and the details about the TV, walk-in closet, etc. Less ceiling, more room. And please, I do not mean to sound bossy, but tidy up first! Even consider setting the table for a meal, invite the vacationer to envision themselves on their vacation in your home. As Ansel Adams said, “Photography is more than a medium for a factual communication of ideas. It is a creative art.”



Table set



Table not set

3. **Be sure to photograph the master bedroom, living room, and kitchen.** The person paying the rent is probably the person sleeping in the master bedroom, so be nice to them. Show them a lovely picture of their bedroom. And make the bed, for crying out loud! No mattress cover shots. People choose vacation rentals over hotels for many reasons, but one is for the kitchen, to cook. So buy some bananas or apples, put them in a bowl, and make your kitchen look lovely.

4. **Go digital or don't go.** Thankfully, most of the scanned printed photos on the site have been updated, so this needs no further nagging. Use your mobile phone if you must. With the high quality cell phones and relatively easy digital cameras, images should be clear, bright and focused.



5. **Hire yours truly.** Does it all sound too time consuming or complicated? Have WeNeedaVacation.com stage and photograph your home. I have photographed more than 350 homes on our site with tremendous success. Here is a recent testimonial I received this week from a homeowner in Orleans:

*"The pictures were wonderful! You really captured the look I was hoping to achieve. Thanks again for a beautiful job!"* [Click here](#) for more information and testimonials.



The key is to put yourself in the shoes of a vacationer who is planning a trip to Cape Cod from out of state. Which pictures would lead you to inquire about the home and possibly mail a stranger a rental check? Also, look at the other rental homes listed in your town – how do they present their homes? And finally, don't neglect the terrific marketing value of the pictures' captions! A well-chosen adjective or "with sliders to back deck and yard," for example, can provide a significant psychological impact on the viewer.

# Top 10 Tips to Acquire Positive Guest Reviews and Prevent Negative Ones

[blog.weneedavacation.com/2013/08/16/top-10-tips-to-acquire-positive-guest-reviews-and-prevent-negative-ones/](http://blog.weneedavacation.com/2013/08/16/top-10-tips-to-acquire-positive-guest-reviews-and-prevent-negative-ones/)

Elizabeth Weedon

By now, it's abundantly clear to most homeowners how critical guest reviews are to the success of renting their vacation rental homes. The goal is to get as many positive reviews posted as possible and to continue to get current, new ones each season. Why are they so important? Because they:

- build the trust and credibility so valuable to vacationers when doing business online
- provide significant, objective marketing value
- may improve the search order of your online listing

Here are some important tips to help you to significantly increase the number of positive guest reviews from your tenants and also reduce the likelihood of your receiving negative ones:

**#1 – Communicate:** Be communicative and accessible to your tenants before, during, and after their stay. Doing so prevents unnecessary misunderstandings and provides an important personal connection between you and them. You are no longer an anonymous business contact but the kind, solicitous person who owns and loves the home.

**#2 – Be pro-active:** Don't assume your tenant will submit a review – ask them for one. Whether in person, by phone, by email, or using your listing's Request Form feature – don't be shy! Vacationers understand even better than homeowners the value of reviews and are often happy to write one.

**#3 – Don't delay:** [Strike while the iron's hot](#), while the memories of their idyllic stay in your home are still fresh and compelling. Asking past tenants for feedback 6 months after they leave and in the middle of winter is less apt to meet with success. Build your request for feedback into your regular, post-rental procedure.

**#4 – Make it easy for your tenants:** By far the easiest way for vacationers to submit a guest review is by clicking a link in the Request Form email you send them right from your listing. This saves them from having to go to our website, search for your listing by ID number, and scroll down to the "Write a review" button. When they receive your email, they are already online and in a position to write something quickly. Although they may have the best of intentions when hearing from you by phone or in person, life gets in the way, and they often don't get around to it.



**#5 – Provide a spotless home:** The most common complaint from vacationers is about cleanliness. Be sure to give your home a deep, thorough [cleaning before the season starts](#), and maintain high standards of [cleanliness at every turnover](#) right until the end of the season, with no let-up. If possible, use a professional cleaner. Homeowners who hire professionals to do turnover cleaning rarely receive negative comments about lack of cleanliness.

**#6 – De-humidify:** A close second in the complaint department has to do with [mustiness, dampness and mold](#) issues. Although it's virtually impossible for homes in a seaside community like the Cape and Islands to be dry and free from mildew, there are preventative measures you can take:

- get one or more de-humidifiers or window air conditioners
- remove unnecessary carpets or rugs
- keep the windows and doors open as much as possible
- remove trees near or around the house
- direct downspouts away from the foundation





**#7 – Provide a bug-free home:** Occasionally vacationers complain that the house was “infested” with bugs. We all know that a few bugs here and there hardly constitute an infestation and are to be expected in the summer. But it's so inexpensive and easy to exterminate a house before the season starts, either by calling a professional exterminator or by simply using store-bought foggers and doing it yourself. This way, if someone complains, you can let them know that the house was treated before their arrival, but you would be happy to have it treated again.

**#8 – Provide an accurate and conservative listing:** It's simple: don't oversell and under-deliver. Although your listing should certainly highlight your property's greatest assets, once someone expresses serious interest in your home, be sure that you point out any possible shortcomings or unusual features so that their [expectations are managed](#) properly and they are pleasantly surprised on their arrival. Read more about [screening your tenants to assure a good fit](#).

**#9 – Return the security deposit immediately:** It's their money – get it back to them right away. Homeowners often don't realize how nervous vacationers get about the return of their security deposits. A family could have enjoyed a fabulous time in your home and been all set to write you a rave review, but, if they've had to wait overlong for their deposit, it could sour every bit of good will. Read more about [security deposits](#).

**#10 – Go above & beyond (often it's the “little things”):** Provide your tenants with plenty of paper products, soaps and detergents, and even some basic seasonings. Leave a welcome gift of some kind such as fresh flowers, a bottle of wine, candies, specialty coffees, etc. The few dollars you spend will be well worth it. Read more about [welcoming your tenants](#) and [treating your tenants as guests](#).



Our family of 5, plus dog, had a fantastic vacation in this wonderful home. The setting is very peaceful and relaxing. The house is well kept and spacious with open rooms. Bay and ocean are only a short drive away.

**Date of Stay:** August 2011 **Date Submitted:** August 2011

Nancy M. from Needham, MA

[1 review by this vacationer](#)

Member since 8/3/2010



# Build the Ideal Vacation Rental Listing Part 2 – Guest Reviews: Post ‘em or weep!

 [blog.weneedavacation.com/2011/12/15/the-ideal-vacation-rental-listing-part-2-guest-reviews-post-em-or-weep/](http://blog.weneedavacation.com/2011/12/15/the-ideal-vacation-rental-listing-part-2-guest-reviews-post-em-or-weep/)

Elizabeth Weedon

They're everywhere and have revolutionized the way we all shop online. Reviews. We consumers are increasingly basing our purchasing decisions on what complete strangers have to say about a product. Your rental home is no exception, and vacationers are demanding independent feedback from prior guests. So, if you don't currently have any guest reviews posted on your online listing – including at least one from the most recent season – you may discover that vacationers are opting for your competitor's listing, which boasts a list of rave reviews about their property.



## **A different perspective**

In addition to the obvious benefits of guest reviews providing persuasive compliments and votes of confidence in your property, they also offer unique and valuable perspectives on your home and location. Often guests will wax poetic about a special experience they enjoyed at your place, an activity that your location offered, or an aspect of your home that particularly resonated with them. Inevitably, they offer insights about your property that either you didn't think to include on your listing or are articulated in a different, more vacationer-centric way.

## **A marketing boost**

Guest reviews provide an invaluable marketing strategy – more credible, as they don't come from the homeowner, and more unique, as the property's seen through vacationers' eyes. And, mark my words, guest reviews are here to stay. Thus, second only to pictures, providing as many guest reviews as possible is critical to creating the ideal listing.

## **And remarkably easy**

There are myriad ways to solicit guest reviews from your past tenants – by emailing them after their departure, leaving a guest book in your property, or, easiest by far, using your WeNeedaVacation.com listing's Guest Review Request feature. The important thing is to make it as easy as possible for your tenants to give you their valuable feedback. Read [Part 3 of the Ideal Vacation Rental Listing series](#) focused on marketing advice about how to craft a creative, effective title and property description for your listing. In case you missed it, see [Part 1](#) for ways to build visual appeal with pictures, videos and captions.

## Past Tenant Communications

Following up with past tenants is highly recommended, both to solicit valuable feedback on their stay and to encourage them to return the next year.

### Guest Review Request

You can send past tenants a request to write a review on your property by either using the pre-defined email template or by creating and saving an email of your own. The feature makes it easy for you to request the feedback after each tenant leaves, and provides a direct link to your property's guest review form.


Property ID# 2007

Dear Paula,

We hope you enjoyed your stay at our property recently. We would really appreciate your taking a moment to provide feedback on how your stay was, what you enjoyed most, and any suggestions that could help us improve a future stay for you and other guests.

Please submit your feedback by clicking the "Write a Review" button below.

Write a Review ▶

Thank you for your time,  
John



[Property ID #2007](#)

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### Past Tenant Email


Prior to the next rental season, we encourage you to reach out to your past tenants and inquirers using the Past Tenant Email form.

Emails are customized by you, the homeowner, include a link to your property listing, and may include your 1<sup>st</sup> property photo and a 4-month calendar preview

Email Creation / Edit
Preview & Send
Email History


Displaying 1 of 32 emails [Send All](#)

Subject: Cape Rental for Summer 2010


Property ID# 8727

Dear Jim,

We are offering our vacation rental home in Brewster to our previous tenants first at a discounted price. Book by February 15th and take \$250 off the weekly rental price. Please see our calendar availability below.



Price	JUNE 2010							Price	JULY 2010							
	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F		Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	
\$2,000				1	2	3	4	\$2,100							1	2
\$2,000	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	\$2,700	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
\$2,000	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	\$2,900	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
\$2,700	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	\$2,700	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
\$2,700	26	27	28	29	30			\$3,000	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
								\$3,000	31							

Price	AUGUST 2010							Price	SEPTEMBER 2010								
	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F		Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F		
\$3,000								\$2,700								1	2
\$3,000	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	\$2,000	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
\$3,000	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	\$2,000	11	12	13	14	15	16	17		
\$3,000	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	\$2,000	18	19	20	21	22	23	24		
\$2,700	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	\$2,000	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		

For more information and photos, please click here: [PropertyID #8727](#)

Available
Booked
Not specified

\* calendar availability as of 1/29/2010 - [click here](#) for full calendar

Please call or email me with any questions.

Best,

Mark Jones  
508-222-1212  
mark.jones@email.com

Past Tenant Communications

## Social Media Marketing for Your Vacation Rental

Why do we recommend that you choose social media sites to market your vacation rental?



Social networking is the fastest and least expensive way to market on the Internet. WeNeedaVacation.com is actively leveraging this movement to:

- Empower you to encourage your friends to spread the word about your listing
- Encourage vacationers to remember your listings via "share" and "favorite"
- Encourage a medium for you to communicate with other homeowners
- Drive traffic to WeNeedaVacation.com

Here's how you can participate:



### Facebook



1. "Like" your WeNeedaVacation.com property listing by clicking the Facebook thumbs-up "Like" button on your listing page. This will post a link and picture to your rental on your Facebook wall for all of your friends to see.

2. Add a message that says "Invite your friends, come rent our fantastic house. Book by December 1st for 2012 prices!"



3. Also on the icon on your property listing is a "share" option where you can choose from several other social media sites to share your listing. If you choose the Facebook option here, you can choose where on Facebook to post your property. Perhaps you belong to a group.



**Pinterest:** A fast growing, popular visual site focused on pictures, videos, and all things beautiful.

1. Create a Pinboard for your rental: Click "Create boards," and then on the Create Your First Pinboards page, click "Add" select a category, and click "Create."
2. Install the "Pin it" button to your bookmarks bar. This can be done by clicking on the "About" tab, choosing "Pin it Button" and then dragging the "Pin It" button shown to your Bookmarks bar. Once installed on your bookmarks bar it is very easy to pin pictures to your board.
3. Go to your WeNeedaVacation.com rental page and click the pin it button for the most beautiful pictures on your listing. Keep in mind that the secret to success on Pinterest is BEAUTIFUL. Once you choose which of your pictures you would like to pin, it will magically show up on your chosen pin board. Be sure to pin other interesting pictures (check out our galleries on WeNeedaVacation.com - <http://www.weneedavacation.com/Cape-Cod/Photos/Photo-Galleries/>) that will give potential renters a visual of activities/restaurants/beaches that are near your rental property. Write a brief, but concise description of the picture. Remember that this description stays with the picture as it travels around Pinterest.
4. Stay active on Pinterest by liking, following, commenting and re-pinning. Please visit our Pinterest page – "WeNeedaVacation.com Cape Cod"


### YouTube

1. If you have a property video, you will definitely benefit from uploading it to YouTube. The trick to using YouTube successfully (get a lot of people to watch!) is to “tag”, “title” and “description” your video properly. The Title of your Video should include the town your property is in as well as the words “Cape Cod” or “Nantucket” or “Martha’s Vineyard”. Your title also needs to read “vacation rental house”. These are commonly searched terms and both YouTube and Google will approve. For tags, use the same words as title plus words like “beach vacation”, “Cape Cod, Massachusetts”, ocean, and “summer travel”. Be sure to put phrases in quotations.
2. Check out our YouTube channel - Cape Cod & Islands Vacations - WeNeedaVacation.com We have uploaded many Cape and Islands town videos as well as property videos that we produced. If you would like us to create a video for you or add your video to our channel, contact [Becky@weneedavacation.com](mailto:Becky@weneedavacation.com)
3. Once you have a video on YouTube, be sure to use the “share” button to spread the word and show it to many people via Facebook, email, Twitter.

### Twitter

1. Twitter is busy, nuts, and terrific. While there is a lot of useless dribble, there is also a sure way to communicate news and learn. The trick is following the right people and hoping that they follow you back.
2. A Tweet can only be 140 characters and if you attach a link (which you should – to your rental house!), the link will take up 19 characters no matter how long the actual link is because twitter automatically shortens it. You will want to use these character spaces like the title of your Property listing – short and sweet.
3. The other trick/etiquette to twitter is that, if you daily tweet the same content, people will unfollow you. It is fine to tweet 10 times a day (unlike Facebook where people get tired of that), but just be sure to offer other information, too.
4. Check out and follow us on Twitter – Becky Fischer @weneedavacation to see examples of how we tweet all sorts of content about the Cape & Islands, not just about rental homes.


### WeNeedaVacation.com Blog

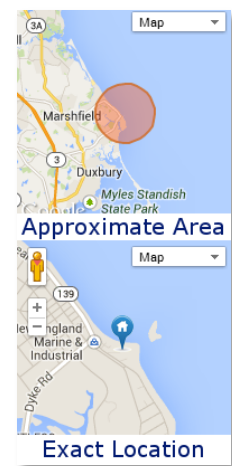
1. Last, and certainly not least, is our Homeowner Blog.
2. Staying up-to-date has never been easier, with two ways to subscribe:
  - a. **Subscribe by Email:** On the Blog homepage, simply enter your email address into the “Subscribe by Email” text box to be notified when new entries are added.
  - b. **Subscribe by RSS:** At the upper left of the homepage, click the RSS feed icon (  ) and choose the feed reader you would like to use to read our posts.
3. We publish 2 – 4 blog entries per month, and all past entries are catalogued and accessible via tag and category lists, post archives and a keyword search. Please visit the Blog, feel free to post a comment, and let us know if you have ideas for future articles!

We are available to help you with these social media outlets. Please contact [Becky@weneedavacation.com](mailto:Becky@weneedavacation.com) if you need assistance promoting your rental home.



## Marketing Checklist to Increase Bookings and Revenue

- Provide as many large and high-quality pictures as possible. And video, too.
- Enter descriptive and informative captions for your pictures.
- Add as many and as current guest reviews as possible, preferably vacationer-entered.
- Make sure your Title and Property Description are informative, descriptive, and well-written.
- Enable the zoom option on your GoogleMap feature. 
- Set up an Owner Special or Last-minute Availability Alert, if needed.
- Keep the date stamp on your calendar current.
- Contact your former tenants and/or past inquirers.
- Take advantage of social media.
- If possible, offer as many of the most popular amenities as possible (A/C, WIFI, king/queen bed, cable TV, outside shower)
- Employ management techniques that engender positive reviews and repeat tenants.



## Guide to Successfully Managing Your Vacation Rental

- **Communicate** adequately with the vacationer before, during and after their stay.
- When **screening** tenants, convey an accurate, if not conservative, description of your home in order to manage their expectations.
- Try to offer some of the most **popular amenities** (WIFI, cable TV, etc.) and beware of the “silent killers” (offering no guest reviews, nothing larger than a double bed). Help them to beat the heat by providing fans, de-humidifiers, and screens in good condition.
- Make sure your **Booking Management** is thorough & reliable. It should allow you to track all documents/payments, keep notes on your vacationers, and prevent double bookings.
- Make sure your **lease** covers you adequately. If you have any unusual check-out expectations of them, be sure they are mentioned in the lease or at some point prior to their arrival.
- Is your **payment schedule** fair (not too aggressive, nor too lenient)?
- Set up your **professional team**: housekeeping/trash/landscaping.
- Provide those **extra touches**: welcome gifts, a well-equipped kitchen, paper products, rainy day activities, etc.
- Leave a **Welcome Letter/Book** not only to convey a personal tone of welcome, but also to point out where things are kept, any specific instructions on how things work in your home, and also what your expectations of your guests are upon check out.
- Provide information about your area: Download and print a copy of our **Cape & Islands Guidebooks** providing information about local beaches, activities, restaurants, etc.
- Be compulsive about **cleanliness** – many vacationers are.
- Return **security deposits** just as soon as possible.
- Request **guest reviews** immediately after returning the security deposit.

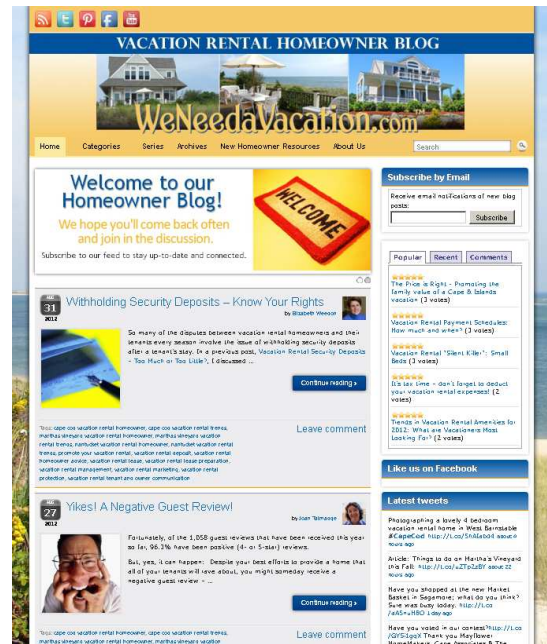
# Valuable Homeowner Resources

## Overview

We are proud to be a trusted resource for our homeowners and are dedicated to providing timely and useful advice relevant to the Cape & Islands market. Some recent additions and enhancements to our resources for homeowners include:

## WeNeedAVacation.com Homeowner Blog – <http://blog.wneedavacation.com>

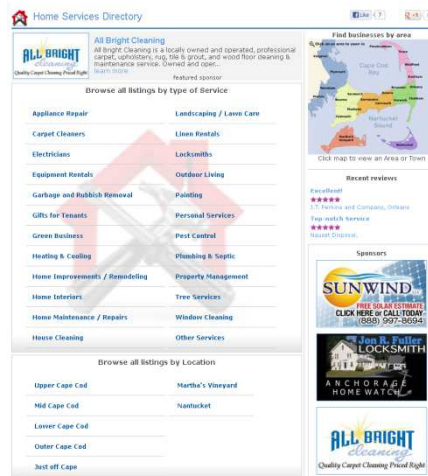
- **Join in on the discussion** – by commenting on posts, homeowners create a community for sharing information and ideas
- **Timely tips tailored to the season** – get advice on returning security deposits in the fall, for example, and handling early bookings in the spring
- **Learn more about our staff** – read our author biographies and learn more about the people behind the voices of our Homeowner Support Team
- **Subscribing is easy** – new posts are published 2 - 4 times a month and can be delivered automatically by email, RSS feed, or both



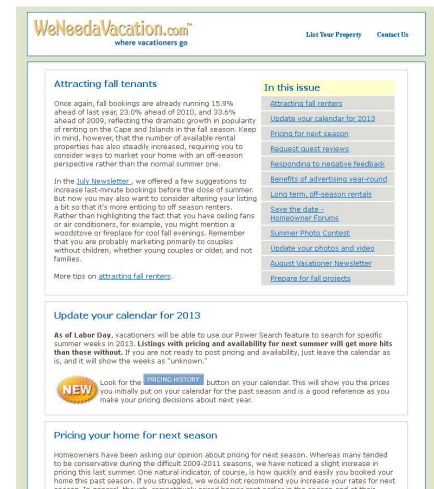
Homeowner Blog

## Home Services Directory and Homeowner Newsletters

- Find providers for home maintenance, repairs, painting, house cleaning, home watch and more in the new and improved **Home Services Directory**
- Registered WeNeedAVacation.com homeowners can write reviews of these services, helping our entire network of fellow homeowners
- **Homeowner Newsletters** provide monthly market updates and timely tips and advice from our blog



Home Services Directory



Homeowner Newsletter

# WeNeedaVacation.com Homeowner Blog

<http://blog.weneedavacation.com/>

- **A valuable resource for you** – our authors are our staff, Cape & Islands homeowners themselves, who write specifically for the vacation rental industry
- **Get advice tailored to the season** – we provide advice on screening your tenants during the winter, for example, and handling early bookings in the fall
- **Find the information you need** – search our blog archives by keyword, category, or tag. If it's not there, let us know, and we'll write about it!
- **Join in the discussion** – by commenting on posts, homeowners create a community for sharing information and ideas
- **Learn more about our staff** – read our author biographies to learn more about some of the people behind the voices of our Homeowner Support Team



WeNeedaVacation.com Homeowner Blog

**It's easy to stay up-to-date!** New posts are published 2 - 4 times a month.

## Subscribe by email:

New posts are automatically delivered to your inbox.



## Subscribe by RSS:

New posts are automatically delivered to your favorite RSS feed reader.



## Bookmark the front page:

In most browsers, simply right click on any part of the front page that is not hyperlinked, and click "Save to Favorites" or "Bookmark This Page." Visit often to see our recent posts.

**We invite you to send us your burning questions and ideas for future posts!**



# Home Services Directory

Our Home Services Directory gives you access to local businesses that can provide you with services such as home maintenance, repairs, painting, house cleaning, home watch, and much more.

In order for us to be the most trusted resource for you, **we depend on feedback from homeowners like you** who rely on these services to maintain their homes.

- Submit a Home Services business review - it's quick and easy!
- For every review you write for a Home Services business, you'll be entered into a monthly drawing for a \$50 VISA gift card
- Sharing your opinion helps our entire network of fellow homeowners

**Home Services Directory**

**ALL BRIGHT cleaning**  
Quality Carpet Cleaning, Paint, Drywall  
All Bright Cleaning is a locally owned and operated, professional carpet, upholstery, rug, tile & grout, and wood floor cleaning & maintenance service. Owned and operated by...  
learn more

featured sponsor

Browse all listings by type of Service

Appliance Repair	Landscaping / Lawn Care
Carpet Cleaners	Linen Rentals
Electricians	Locksmiths
Equipment Rentals	Outdoor Living
Garbage and Rubbish Removal	Painting
Gifts for Tenants	Personal Services
Green Business	Pest Control
Heating & Cooling	Plumbing & Septic
Home Improvements / Remodeling	Property Management
Home Interiors	Tree Services
Home Maintenance / Repairs	Window Cleaning

Find businesses by area

Click map to view an Area or Town

Recent reviews

Excellent!

★★★★★  
J.L. Perkins and Company, Orleans

Top-notch Service

★★★★★  
Nauset Disposal

Sponsors

**Jon R. Fuller LOCKSMITH**  
ANCHORAGE HOME WATCH

Martha's Vineyard Homeowner Services

Narrow the list by: Martha's Vineyard | All Sub-Categories | **Reset**

Listings per page: 10 | Showing 1 - 9 of 9

Sort by: Top Results | Alphabetical | Town | Category

**SILVA Cleaning Services**  
★★★★★  
Serving all your housecleaning needs including both weekly rental turnovers as well as regular mid-week housecleaning. We've been in business on the Island for many years and have a proven track record and loyal customers. No house is too small or too big.  
Categories: House Cleaning  
Servicing: Martha's Vineyard  
PO Box 2102, Edgartown -- (508) 493-7694  
[Write a review](#)

**Photography, Video, and Consultation Services**  
★★★★★  
Would you like to improve your property listing? Do you wish you received more inquiries for your vacation rental? Allow WeNeedAVacation to help you! Take advantage of our personalized, on-site photography, video, and consultation services. Becky will provide extra lighting, fresh flowers and staging to take bright digital pictures. She will then... show more  
Categories: Other Services  
Servicing: Upper Cape Cod, Mid Cape Cod, Lower Cape Cod, Outer Cape Cod, Just off Cape, Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket  
(508) 789-5484  
[Write a review](#)

**Expert Closets**  
★★★★★  
We are Cape Cod's specialists in custom closets and storage solutions for the entire home. We will also travel to your Vineyard or Nantucket home. Do you need to customize a storage or owner's closet? A garage? Your kitchen or pantry? We work with you to determine your needs and design a storage and organization system based on your needs. Call... show more

Search  
Search by business name

View by Cape & Islands Region  
Click map to zoom in

Enter the Who Needs A Vacation? 2012 Photo Contest  
Someone will win \$2000 towards a Cape Cod or Islands vacation!

Cape & Islands E-Newsletter  
Receive our monthly Cape & Islands Newsletter with articles, events and things to do throughout the year. [View example](#)  
Enter your email address  
**Submit**

Download a Free Cape Guide (PDF)  
• Upper Cape  
• Mid Cape  
• Lower Cape  
• Outer Cape

Only registered WeNeedAVacation.com homeowners may submit a review to a Home Services business.

A sample review:

**Top-notch Service**

★★★★★

Joan T.  
Orleans, MA  
2 reviews

9/1/2012

Member since Oct 1997

Since 2009, we have used Nauset Disposal for our weekly trash and recycling pickup. We find them to be very efficient, prompt, easy to reach, and very professional. Highly recommended!

Don't see your favorite business listed? Refer them to us, and get 2 free months if you are an annual subscriber or 1 free month if you list for 6 months.

# Booking Management

Booking management provides an easy and efficient way to file, manage and track all of your bookings each season.

[Home](#) > [Homeowner Center](#) > [Bookings](#)

PropertyID #10000

Email Inquiries		Bookings				
<a href="#">View Calendar</a> <a href="#">Edit Calendar</a> <a href="#">Feedback</a> <a href="#">Help</a>						
Filter By: Date Range: <input type="text" value="2/25/2011"/> to <input type="text"/> Status: <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Find"/>						
Enter Booking: <a href="#">Quick Entry</a>   <a href="#">Full Entry</a>		View: <a href="#">Source/Price</a>   <a href="#">Tracking</a>   <a href="#">Notes</a>				
Arrive	Depart	Status	Name	Source	Price	Actions
6/4/2011	6/11/2011	Booked	Smith, Joe	WeNeedaVacation	\$1,800.00	<a href="#">Edit</a>
6/18/2011	6/25/2011	Tentative	Newman, Mary	WeNeedaVacation	\$0.00	<a href="#">Edit</a>
7/2/2011	7/9/2011	Booked	Blake, Julie	Family / Friends	\$1,800.00	<a href="#">Edit</a>
7/9/2011	7/16/2011	Booked	O'Leary, Michael	WeNeedaVacation	\$1,800.00	<a href="#">Edit</a>
7/9/2011	7/16/2011	Cancelled	Izzicupo, Jon	Family / Friends	\$0.00	<a href="#">Edit</a>
8/6/2011	8/20/2011	Booked	Ulrich, Joanne	WeNeedaVacation	\$3,600.00	<a href="#">Edit</a>
9/3/2011	9/10/2011	Booked	Piacenti, Nancy	Alumni Mag.	\$1,200.00	<a href="#">Edit</a>

## Benefits

- View at a glance which weeks are booked, by whom, and at what price
- Retain notes about your tenants for future reference
- Any bookings you enter or change will automatically be reflected on your calendar.
- Prevents double booking
- Enter and track the source where each booking is coming from
- Receive Weekly Booking Update emails and Overdue Alerts

## Tracking Booking Documents and Monies

- Track the lease, rental deposits, security deposits sent/returned, etc.
- Assign due dates and dates received, and amount due/received
- View items overdue (in red)

Email Inquiries		Bookings										
<a href="#">View Calendar</a> <a href="#">Edit Calendar</a> <a href="#">Feedback</a> <a href="#">Help</a>												
Filter By: Date Range: <input type="text" value="2/25/2011"/> to <input type="text"/> Status: <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Find"/>												
Enter Booking: <a href="#">Quick Entry</a>   <a href="#">Full Entry</a>		View: <a href="#">Source/Price</a>   <a href="#">Tracking</a>   <a href="#">Notes</a>										
Arrive	Depart	Status	Name	Lease Sent	Lease Rec'd	Deposit Rec'd	Balance Rec'd	Security Rec'd	Info Sent	Keys Ret'd	Sec. Dep. Ret.	Actions
6/4/2011	6/11/2011	Booked	Smith, Joe	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			<a href="#">Edit</a>
6/18/2011	6/25/2011	Tentative	Newman, Mary	✓	3/1/11							<a href="#">Edit</a>
7/2/2011	7/9/2011	Booked	Blake, Julie	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				<a href="#">Edit</a>
7/9/2011	7/16/2011	Booked	O'Leary, Michael	✓	3/31/11	3/31/11	6/1/11	6/1/11	7/1/11	7/23/11	8/9/11	<a href="#">Edit</a>
7/9/2011	7/16/2011	Cancelled	Izzicupo, Jon									<a href="#">Edit</a>
8/6/2011	8/20/2011	Booked	Ulrich, Joanne	✓	2/5/11	2/12/11						<a href="#">Edit</a>
9/3/2011	9/10/2011	Booked	Piacenti, Nancy	✓	✓	3/31/11	6/1/11	6/1/11	8/27/11	9/17/11	10/1/11	<a href="#">Edit</a>
Key for Tracking Items: ✓ Completed item <span style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; padding: 2px;"> </span> Due Date <span style="background-color: #ff0000; color: white; padding: 2px;"> </span> Overdue item												

## **Homeowner Consulting Services for your Cape Cod, Nantucket, or Martha's Vineyard Vacation Rental**

In addition to our normal free customer service, we also offer a more formal, fee-based service for those homeowners who would benefit by an in-depth, one-on-one, dedicated consulting session. With over 100 years of combined vacation rental experience on Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket, our consulting staff can help you increase your rental revenue and enjoy a successful and rewarding rental-by-owner experience.



Joan, Susan, Shannon, Elizabeth, Becky, & Lauren (Taryn absent)

### **Vacation Renting 101**

New to renting a vacation home or to marketing one online? We will help set up your listing or edit it in order to create the most effective listing possible. We can provide advice about pricing, photos, your calendar, title and description, and familiarize you with features such as Owner Specials, Last-minute Availability Alerts, and the Guest Review Request Form.

In addition, we can provide professional assistance with management techniques and advice related to the lease and security deposits, payment schedules, screening and communicating with tenants, tracking inquiries and bookings, and more.

Cost: \$40/half hour. Call (888-281-8660) to schedule a phone consultation.

### **Vacation Renting 201**

A refresher course for the veteran: Similar to our Vacation Renting 101 course, we will assist long-time listers who have a listing in need of sprucing up to improve its marketing power. We will help you implement new management techniques and familiarize you with our new features to improve your pictures, get guest reviews, reach out to prior tenants and inquirers, and more.

Cost: \$40/half hour. Call (888-281-8660) to schedule a phone consultation.

### **Competitive Analysis**

We will look at your listing carefully and compare it with similar properties in your area. A report will be emailed to you with a list of comparable listings and our recommendations regarding: pricing, amenities, photos, the use of special features available to help promote your listing, and other ideas for enhancing the appeal of your listing.

Cost: \$40/ half hour. Call (888-281-8660) to schedule a phone consultation.

### **Calendar Assistance**

We will help you set up your pricing and availability calendar at the start of each booking season and then maintain it for you on a regular basis throughout the length of your subscription. You can call us or send us an email whenever you have a change in your pricing or availability.

Cost: \$50 per subscription period.

## Vacation Planner

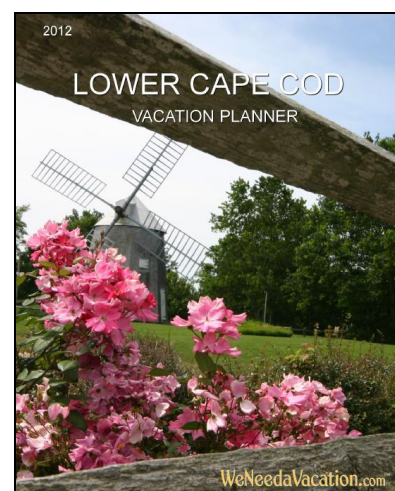
### Overview

The Cape & Islands Vacation Planner highlights hundreds of businesses, allowing vacationers to search by region or town for dining, shopping, activities, and more. Some recent enhancements that promote vacationer engagement include:

- Reviews submitted by vacationers and homeowners
- Favorites and sharing capabilities
- Annual Guidebooks by region for you to leave for your tenants
- Daily listings of events by town



Vacation Planner



Regional Guidebook

### How does this help vacation rentals?

- **Increases WeNeedaVacation's presence** – become known as the year-round Cape & Islands site for visitors (and locals too!)
- **Creates a stickier site** – encourages website visitors to return to the site not just to find their rental each year, but to help plan their vacation before and during their stays.
- **Promotes your town** – prospective tenants searching for rentals are often interested in what is nearby (restaurants, things to do, beaches, etc.).
- **Creates a more social experience** – the vacation planner, coordinated with our Facebook and Twitter pages, creates a community for sharing information and ideas.

Sample Business Page