



# The Ideal Listing



**WeNeedaVacation.com™**  
where vacationers go

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Wellesley, MA 02482  
(781) 239-1469

Brewster Office  
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Brewster, MA 02631  
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## Getting back to Basics

When it comes to marketing your [Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, or Nantucket rental](#), it's best to keep it simple and get back to some core, tried-and-true marketing strategies. This will begin and end with your online vacation rental listing. A sharp, informative vacation rental listing is critical to your overall booking success. You don't have to be a marketing guru to create a quality vacation rental listing. This We Need a Vacation guide is a basic overview of some things to include for the ideal vacation rental listing.



*A picture's worth 1,000 words –  
post as many and as top-quality  
photos as possible*

# I

## Elements of a Visually-Appealing Listing

### Pictures

Offering good **quality pictures** - and plenty of them - on your vacation rental listing is critical to the success of your marketing efforts. The more quality images your listing has, the better informed prospective tenants will be, and the more apt they will be to inquire about your home for rental. At a minimum, include an exterior shot, the living room, dining room or area, kitchen, each bedroom, a sun or family room, a porch/deck/patio, and the yard. And remember to include an image of the nearest beach as well.

Note the word “quality” when we described the recommended images. A blurry, poor resolution image of your property will make it look dark, shabby and unattractive, even if it isn’t. Luckily, with improved digital photography technology through a wide variety of devices including cell phones, it’s never been easier to take quality images. Go out on a nice day full of light, and showcase your property!



### Video

A **picture is worth a thousand words, so what is a video worth?** If you’re looking to make your listing stand out even further, a short video (it’s free to post 60-second videos on all WeNeedaVacation.com listings) can highlight key features of your property and convey a greater sense of space for a particular room or scene. You can use live video, picture montages, or a hybrid piece that includes streaming video of the views with a series of photo montages of the interior.

Adding captions to images or video provides another great opportunity to further market your property. Captions not only offer helpful information but can also convey a specific tone about the image. The psychological impact can be subtle but significant. Use evocative adjectives when you can such as “sunny,” “beautiful,” “serene,” or “comfortable.”

### Professional Tip

*Photo/video captions provide a valuable, often-neglected opportunity to market your property.*



## II

## Guest Reviews



Having guest reviews posted on your listing has become vital to the success of marketing your [Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, or Nantucket rental](#).

Back in the day, when you wanted to know whether you should obtain a certain service or product, or if you should frequent a new restaurant in town, how did you go about doing it? We assume you asked family and friends whom you knew have used them to gather their opinions.

Similarly, today's Internet economy is reliant on social media platforms for marketing purposes, and more and more users depend on reviews to determine whether or not they should try something.

Here are a few reasons why guest reviews are so important to include with your listing:

### 1. They Build Credibility

You could talk all day about how great your property is, but one good review by a non-partisan, former guest provides much greater credibility.

### 2. They Offer a Unique Perspective

Guest reviews enable prospective tenants to envision your property through the eyes of other vacationers who have already stayed there. Your past tenants can provide insights about your property that you either didn't think to include or are articulated in a different, more vacationer-centric way.

### 3. They Are a Free and Easy Way to Market Your Home

There are myriad ways to solicit guest reviews from your past tenants – by emailing them after their departure, by leaving a guest book in your property, or, easiest and most effective by far, by using your WeNeedaVacation.com listing's Guest Review Request Form feature.

The important thing is to make it as easy as possible for your tenants to submit their valuable feedback.

#### Professional Tip

*A listing with 6 or more vacationer-entered guest reviews is twice as likely to get fully booked as a listing with no reviews!*

*Here's your opportunity to  
wax poetic about your property!*

### III

## Title and Property Description



Your title and property description provide you the opportunity to brag about your property, incorporating colorful, evocative, vibrant words and phrases. What sets your property apart from others? What do you think vacationers will enjoy most about it? The title and description are not the appropriate areas for a ton of quantifiable data, which is usually provided elsewhere on the listing.

### Title

The title is important because it appears on the brief summary list of homes presented to vacationers in their search results. So, be sure to single out the most attractive features to “sell” your home and to ensure that viewers “click through” to see your full listing. Although it must be concise, make it descriptive and appealing, easily accomplished by simply adding an adjective or two.

#### Examples:

*“Spacious Waterfront Home Ideal for Two Families”*

*“Newly Renovated Cape – Sun, Privacy, Walk to Beach”*

### Description

Vacationers will be looking for certain things right away in a property description to determine whether or not they want to inquire further. When creating a property description, be sure to include information about the following:

- The interior of your home, particularly highlighting any special amenities such as air conditioning, Internet access, outdoor shower, linens provided, etc.
- The home's immediate setting, including the yard and neighborhood, and, of course, any desirable views.
- Your property's location and proximity to area attractions, such as restaurants, shopping, bike trails, and, of course, the closest beach.

In addition, make sure the description is grammatically and factually correct and presented in full, flowing, enjoyable-to-read sentences.

#### Professional Tip

*Be sure your description includes all 3 of these aspects of your property: its interior, its immediate setting, and its location!*



## IV

### Special Offers



#### Professional Tip

*Increase your listing's visibility and create a greater enticement to vacationers by posting a special offer of some kind.*

What gets you in the door of a particular restaurant or store? When everything else is equal, an effective way for businesses of all kinds to attract patrons is by issuing a special offer. Whether it's a free gift or a coupon taking a percentage off your order, special offers are increasingly being used as businesses compete for sales. You can use this type of marketing for your vacation listing as well.

Given the large number of vacation rentals that you are competing with, it can be incredibly tough to distinguish your listing from the other vacation rentals. A special offer can provide that little extra boost to encourage someone to book your home. It doesn't have to be much either.

Special offers could include

- A gift certificate to a restaurant, ice cream parlor, coffee shop, etc.
- A gas card/certificate
- A coupon for a local shop in your area
- A free extra night, a late check-out, or early check-in
- An overall price reduction in rent

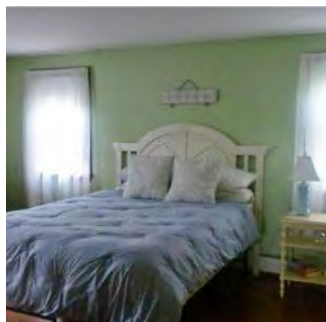
Whatever special offer you decide on, make sure to highlight it by posting an Owner Special. An Owner Special is a free feature provided by WeNeedaVacation.com to spotlight your offer as a promotion to provide greater visibility. In order to get the most out of the feature, please consider the following tips:

- If you do reduce your price and announce that you have in an Owner Special, be sure to revise your pricing on your Calendar, too. Remember that vacationers can search by price caps, so if you don't reduce the price on your calendar, you may miss folks looking for a price cap below your original price.
- Be specific! Rather than, "Enjoy all that the Cape has to offer," give the details, such as "Week of 8/10-8/17 just reduced \$200! Now only \$1800!"
- If your Owner Special is time-sensitive or specific to a certain rental week, be sure you update or remove it as soon as it becomes inappropriate.
- Use a Last-Minute Availability Alert in conjunction with an Owner Special to further highlight availability within the next four weeks of posting.



# V

## Keeping Everything Current



This is the simplest thing for homeowners to do, but one of the biggest complaints from prospective vacationers is the fact that listings are sometimes not current: either the pricing is wrong or the availability calendar hasn't been updated in a while. Whatever the case, it can be terribly frustrating to vacationers and discouraging to you, as you may not achieve the results you were hoping for. Below are a few areas to take a look at to ensure that vacationers are receiving the most up-to-date information on your [Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, or Nantucket rental](#).

### Pricing and Availability Calendar

Clicking the Update Date Stamp icon at the top of your calendar on a regular basis will assure vacationers that your pricing and availability information is reliable and current. A listing with a recent date stamp will give vacationers more confidence in your listing and might even create a sense of urgency to book a stay right away. In addition, make sure to update your pricing to reflect any special promotions, holiday specials, or other changes. Be sure there are no odd checkmarks midweek, and do not check as unavailable the date that tenants are due to leave.

### Your Contact Information

Although the contact information on your listing is not directly related to your marketing efforts, if your phone number or email address has changed, vacationers won't be able to reach you! Naturally, this isn't something that you need to monitor regularly, like your calendar, but it's a good idea to take a look at your contact information at the beginning of each new rental season. We strongly recommend that you provide both a phone number and an email address (or better yet, two different ones) with which to receive inquiries, to provide the quickest and most reliable way to get in touch with you.

#### Professional Tip

*An out-of-date calendar is a turn-off to vacationers!*



## VI

### Confirm your map location



One of the most important considerations for vacationers when searching for a vacation rental is its location, which is why online listings include a map designating the location of your home. Vacationers viewing your listing are provided greater confidence that your location is where you describe it to be.

Also, vacationers can view the results of their *Power Search* on WeNeedaVacation.com as pinpoints on a map. They can zoom in and out of any area, viewing the listings relative to such landmarks as the beaches, the center of town, or other points of interest to them.

You can decide to enable this zoom capability or allow only a limited zoom, showing only the approximate location of your home. If you choose not to enable the zoom capability, your listing will still appear

on the limited zoom map, but as vacationers zoom in to view the exact location of the homes, the pinpoint for your listing will disappear. Thus, we recommend that you enable full zoom capability to increase your listing's visibility.

Regardless of your decision about the zoom level, be sure that your home is placed correctly on the map.

**By following the basic marketing steps in the We Need a Vacation eBook, you can ensure that your vacation home rental listing is as effective as possible in bringing you your desired bookings.**

### Additional Homeowner Resources

<http://www.weneedavacation.com/Vacation-Rental-Resources>

#### Email

**Vacationers:** [vacationer@weneedavacation.com](mailto:vacationer@weneedavacation.com)

**Homeowners:** [ownerhelp@weneedavacation.com](mailto:ownerhelp@weneedavacation.com)

**Businesses:** [info@weneedavacation.com](mailto:info@weneedavacation.com)

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#### Professional Tip

*Increase your listing's visibility by enabling the map zoom to display your exact location.*