

# Bed and Breakfast

*Beginning  
a  
Bed and Breakfast  
in  
South Carolina*



**GUIDELINES FOR  
DEVELOPMENT**

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# **GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT**

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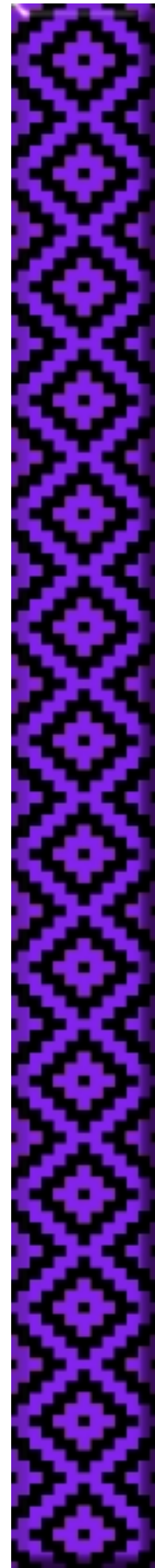
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Clemson University**



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Country Victoria Bed & Breakfast, Charleston, SC  
<http://www.virtualcities.com/ons/sc/z/scz3701.htm>



1790 House Bed and Breakfast, Georgetown, SC  
<http://www.1790house.com/index.htm>

## I. INTRODUCTION

Although Bed and Breakfast (B&B) operations were possibly the earliest form of accommodations for travelers, in many areas they were completely replaced by inns and hotels. In the United States B&Bs are making a comeback, serving travelers who want a special personal home-like hospitality and a good breakfast to start the day. Today we have over one hundred B&Bs in South Carolina, most of which were started in the past decade,

Owning and operating a B&B can provide both financial and personal rewards for some individuals and families. This manual will provide information needed to decide if operating a B&B is ideal for your situation. If your decision is to began a B&B, the information in this manual will assist you by providing the guidelines for a successful enterprise.

This manual is not intended to serve as a source of planning and health regulations which vary from region to region. Be sure to contact the appropriate regulatory authorities in your area early in your decision-making process.

Additional assistance is currently available both to existing operations and prospective hosts regarding operations, financial planning, and marketing. For additional information contact:

Developing Naturally  
Strom Thurmond Institute of Government & Public Affairs  
Perimeter Road  
Clemson, SC 29634-0125  
Telephone: 864/ 656-0372  
<http://www.strom.clemson.edu/>

Rural Development Coordinator  
Division of Community Development  
SC Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism  
1205 Pendleton Street  
Columbia, SC 29201  
Telephone: 803/ 734-1449



1790 House Bed and Breakfast



## II. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

### A. Is a Bed & Breakfast for me?

Nicholls-Crook  
Plantation House Bed and Breakfast  
Woodruff, South Carolina  
<http://www.bbonline.com/sc/nicholls/>

Many of us at some time in our lives think about owning our own business. Before starting a venture, it is important to be aware that the majority of small businesses that are started end in failure. Careful analysis of ourselves and our resources in conjunction with proper planning will greatly increase our chances for starting a profitable and enjoyable Bed & Breakfast (B&B) enterprise.

Although you may have had a great experience as a guest at a B&B during a business or vacation trip, you and your family might not be suited to being the gracious, thoughtful hosts that are required for a successful operation.

#### **You should ask yourself the following questions:**

- Does my family like meeting all types of people?
- Do I like to fix attractive, interesting and tasty breakfast dishes?
- Do I like to entertain strangers?
- Do I mind giving up some of my privacy at home?
- Can I always be cheerful and helpful around my guests?
- Is my home always clean and neat?
- Am I successful at managing and organizing my home expenses?

**If “yes” is your response to all of the above questions, you might prove to be a successful B&B owner operator. If your response is less than positive, you would be well advised to consider some other type of endeavor.**

### B. Meet the professionals

One of the first things you should do is talk to those who are operating B&Bs. Bed & Breakfast operations have many characteristics that are unique. Obtain as much insight into other B&Bs as possible before planning your own operation

- Talk to as many B&B owners as you can about their operations and your B&B plans. Don't be afraid to ask simple and complex questions. It is far more efficient to learn from the experiences of others.
- If possible, offer to help at someone's B&B for a few days.
- Take advantage of any educational programs that are available through associations, university extension programs, and state tourism agencies.
- Be sure to review available books, pamphlets and articles for ideas on management, decor, and pricing. (See list in Appendix.)

## C. Defining your bed & breakfast theme

Most guests who visit B&B establishments do so for home-like atmosphere that offers a unique decor and personalized treatment. Every B&B offers a different experience. You must evaluate your home resources and determine what unique qualities you might offer to your guest.

Define the amenities that you might be able to provide at your home such as:

- a scenic view
- antique furnishings
- types of rooms
- library
- fireplace
- swimming pool
- proximity to attractions
- unique menus and services

Seriously consider how well your amenities will meet the potential customer's needs and what image you should market. Be sure to deliberate the following:

- How attractive is the neighborhood?
- How accessible is transportation?
- How close are good restaurants?
- What is your home's image?
- Is the floor plan acceptable?
- Is the kitchen adequate?
- Are there enough bathrooms?
- Do the water and sewage systems work well?
- Are private quarters possible?

Be sure to put your evaluation **in writing**. In your summary ask yourself:

- What makes my B&B concept different and better?
- How will it best serve my guests?
- Does my B&B concept have the potential to become successful?
- How might it grow?



## D. Planning for development

An initial step in the development process is the drafting of a **business plan**. Many wonderful business ideas fail because they were not logically thought out. **A business plan is the framework and includes:**

- **A basic description of your proposed business**
- **The related goals and objectives**
- **How you plan to become successful**

The plan organizes on paper your thoughts of why you are in business, what your market is, what your strengths and weaknesses are, and your financial and management environment. The plan will help you make insightful business decisions and inform potential lenders about your business. An excellent guide to developing a plan is the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service publication “The Business Plan.”

There are planning considerations in the B&B business that have special industry related characteristics. These variables include:

- **Revenue Forecasting**
- **Start-Up Costs**
- **Operation Expenses**

You should understand these thoroughly prior to starting your plan.

**Revenue Forecasting:** Accurately forecasting sales revenue is an extremely difficult task. Even after you have begun your operation you should continuously review your forecast. Your perception of future sales is the guide to expense and operation planning. Sales revenues are calculated by multiplying the number of rooms rented during a given period by the rate. Your best background information for predicting sales is the data available on past occupancy in your area.

**Occupancy is the measure of the percentage of available rooms that are rented.** The South Carolina Department of Parks Recreation and Tourism, The American Bed and Breakfast Association and reservation service organizations can supply occupancy information. Occupancy varies with seasons, holidays, days of the week, and the weather. The occupancy rate during your first year will depend on your market, the uniqueness of your B&B, and the amount of promotion you undertake. Usually the occupancy rates for new B&B operations are roughly forty percent of the average occupancy rate of the hotels and motels in your area. For example, if the hotels in your area have an occupancy rate of 60 percent in June you might have an occupancy rate of 24 percent that month. However, some rural B&Bs average as low as 10 percent occupancy during the first year.

After estimating your rate for the first year, you should estimate for the second and third years of operation. The occupancy rate for these years will be affected by word-of-mouth recommendations, marketing, and referrals. **A well managed should increase its occupancy by over 10 percent per year.** Projected occupancy alone will not allow you to forecast your sales revenue.

To forecast sales revenues you must also set your room rates. **Revenues are determined by multiplying room rates by occupancy.** Your rates should take into account start up and operational costs. Remember

that the rate you charge should represent “fair value for the dollar.”

There are many factors that influence the value of a room. For example, rooms with private baths, luxury amenities, excellent location, or in a heavy demand area should have a higher rate. Lower rates would be charged for rooms that lack private baths or have single beds. The location and quality of accommodation and services you provide will have a strong bearing on the rates visitors will be willing to pay.

As a rule of thumb, you can probably set a rate somewhere between what a small motel and a large hotel in your area are charging. Check around with other operators in the state and determine the average current rate for your type of bed and breakfast.

## E. Identifying expenses

As a beginning B&B operator you will face both **start-up costs** and **operating expenses**. Start-up cost must also be considered in your B&B plan. Although you might feel that your home is ready for your first guest you will probably find that improvements will be required to create an ideal B&B facility.

**Start-Up Costs:** The first step in determining your start-up cost is to make a list of all the expenses that you will incur. Your estimated cost will help you determine if the B&B concept will profitably work in your home.

Be sure to review your cost list with knowledgeable people in the industry and also make sure that you have covered any costs that might be incurred due to local fire & health ordinance requirements.

**Operating Expenses** will begin when you open for business. These expenses will vary monthly and will be greatly influenced by the number of guests. These expenses will include:

- **food & beverage**
- **soaps, dry cleaning, laundry**
- **office supplies**
- **maintenance**
- **utilities**
- **salary, wages and employee benefits**
- **marketing**



It is important to identify your expenses as accurately, as you can. Your profit is revenue brought in which exceeds your costs. Your expenses will have an influence on determining the rates you must charge to your guests.





TABLE 2

## INSURANCE CHECKLIST

Liability (Minimum \$1,000,000)	_____
Comprehensive Personal Liability	_____
Business Liability for B&B Operations	_____
Personal Liability for Non-Owner Host	_____
Products Liability for Food Served	_____
Premises Medical for Business Guests	_____
Premises Medical for Personal Guests	_____

### Property

All Risk Coverage-Building	_____
Replacement Cost on Building	_____
Peril Coverage on Contents	_____
Replacement Cost Coverage on Contents	_____
Contents Coverage for Non Owner Resident Host	_____
Appurtenant Structure Coverage Business Related	_____
Personal Property of Guests	_____
Antiques and Fine Arts Coverage	_____
Credit Card Coverage	_____
Loss of Rental Income	_____

Be sure to discuss your needs with several insurance companies which offer special coverage. Do some comparative shopping, but remember that the least expensive source might not be the best insurance. **Seek out companies that have special B&B packages.**

## G. Planning for taxes

Taxes for home businesses can be extremely complicated. Be sure to have a **professional accountant who is familiar with home-based businesses** assist you in understanding your legal obligations and developing a tax plan that best suits your operation.



## H. Meeting local requirements

Early in your planning process review your local zoning, fire safety, and health regulations. Many of these requirements are set at the local level. It is important to contact the municipal planning and building departments in your area and to inquire about business license and operating permit requirements.

**Zoning** problems in rural areas are unlikely. At the local or municipal level, there is a wide diversity in zoning ordinances from town to town. If you perceive any difficulties, work with zoning administrators and assist them in understanding the type of business that you propose. It is a good idea to provide them with B&B zoning guidelines from other towns as examples. Zoning review boards consider the beneficial or negative impacts a B&B might have on the local area. They are concerned about keeping the neighborhood values. Visual impacts, and changes in traffic and parking will be considered by the board. If it is necessary to obtain a zoning change be sure to discuss your plans with neighbors and be considerate of any associated concerns they may have. Remember that obtaining a zoning variance will take time and involve a public meeting. The assistance of an attorney may be required.

**Health regulations** vary greatly from area to area, and it is quite likely that you will have to meet state and local regulations. You will have to meet requirements pertaining to water quality, sewage disposal, food storage and handling. Early in your planning process meet with your health officials and become familiar with the legal requirements. Have your health officials make a preliminary examination of your home and discuss any changes in facilities or planned operations that may be required.

**Fire Safety** is another item that requires the understanding of state and local codes. In many areas the building codes cover fire safety. Your B&B should have **smoke alarms, marked exits, and visible fire extinguishers**. Local regulations may also require fire doors, additional exits, and storage areas for flammable materials. Be sure to thoroughly review your requirements with the local officials.



Two Suns Inn Bed & Breakfast, Beaufort, SC  
<http://bnblist.com/sc/twosuns/>



Liberty Hall Inn Bed & Breakfast  
Pendleton, SC

<http://www.usagetaways.com/sc/liberty/>



Two Suns Inn Bed & Breakfast, Beaufort, SC

<http://bnblist.com/sc/twosuns/>

### **III. ADMINISTRATION:**

## **Developing Policies and Procedures**

Prior to accepting your first reservation, it is important to develop basic **operating and administrative policies and procedures**.

### **A. Reservation Requests**

Reservation requests usually will be made by telephone or through the mail. Experience has shown that most individuals who call for reservations expect to get through on the first or second attempt and few will continue trying.

Restrict family use of your reservation telephone line. It may be worthwhile to install an additional telephone for family and personal needs. Consider the purchase of a telephone answering machine to cover for you during your absence. The best solution to the problem is to ensure that telephone lines are kept open and that someone is available to provide information and take reservations.

### **B. Handling Reservations**

#### **RESERVATION REQUESTS SHOULD BE ANSWERED IMMEDIATELY**

All inquiries for reservations should be handled in a professional manner. A map indicating your location should always be enclosed with your confirmation. You may include information about events, attractions and tourist facilities in the area. Your local Chamber of Commerce and/or South Carolina Travel Information Centers (list in Appendix) can supply this information. (Copies of these forms may be found in the Appendix.)

- **Telephone Reservation Request:**

This form outlines the type of information that you require from anyone wishing to make a reservation over the telephone. Advise callers that reservations will be confirmed after you receive their deposit. Set a date by which the deposit has to be in your hands (i.e. within 14 days).

- **Deposit Receipt/Reservation Confirmation:**

Once you receive the deposit, prepare a confirmation and forward it to the guest. Keep a copy for your records. Ensure the deposit/cancellation/refund policy is clear on this form. Staple your copy to the original reservation request form.

- **Tracking Reservations:**

Enter all reservations in a date book or calendar page such as outlined in the Appendix.

Where more than one room is available, divide your calendar into the desired number of spaces and indicate the type of bedding available in each room.

Once a host has committed a room, the visitor's name is entered in pencil in the appropriate space. When you receive a deposit the guest's name may be entered in ink, or the letter "D" for "Deposit" placed in the space.

A one-page/month calendar enables the host to see, at a glance, what reservations are expected.

## **C. Deposit/Cancellation/Refund Policy**

It is standard policy to request a one-night's deposit at the time reservations are made, if possible. A credit card number can be given over the phone for a deposit if you accept credit cards. Confirmation is mailed only upon receipt of the deposit.

Have a policy related to refunding in cases where cancellations are made. Most hotels and motels will refund deposits if cancellations are received up to 48 hours prior to arrival date. In determining your policy, bear in mind that your ability to re-rent cancelled accommodation decreases as you get closer to that date.

Ensure that your policy is understood by all guests by clearly outlining it on your registration confirmation form. An example of a refund policy is outlined on the confirmation form included in the Appendix.

## **D. Handling Long Distance Calls**

Charges for long distance calls are normally paid by the caller. Remember however, responses to messages will result in charges to you, the host. With this in mind, you may want to advise callers that messages will be returned on a "collect call" basis. (Unless they are trying to make a reservation.)

## **E. Office Equipment and Supplies**

Keep a supply of stationery items, such as receipt books and postage stamps on hand. Consider purchasing a typewriter or personal computer to give your correspondence a professional look. A personal computer will go a long way to assist you in keeping records.

## F. Bookkeeping/Accounting

The best time to set up a record-keeping system is before you start the business. **Experience clearly indicates that the use of an adequate record-keeping system increases the chances of business survival.** Too often, those entering a business think they must keep records only because it is required by the Internal Revenue Service. However, accurate and complete financial records can help the owner monitor the business and make plans for the future based on financial knowledge rather than guesswork.

Contact an accountant who is familiar with home-based businesses, and develop a simple accounting procedure which will make year-end calculations easy. Additional bookkeeping information may be obtained by contacting your local Clemson Extension service or technical college.

## G. Setting House Rules

Every business that operates smoothly runs with guidelines. It is important to your guests to know what is acceptable to you. It would be to everyone's advantage to have your guidelines available to answer any questions they may have. Making the list will also clarify the boundaries to yourself

When determining your house rules and regulations, keep in mind that your guests may be overwhelmed by a lengthy list. Focus on the rules that you feel are most important for a well run business. State your rules in a positive manner. A long list of negative rules is a turn-off to customers. Post your policies in the rooms and at the front desk; they will be respected if you make them clear. Important or unusual items should be mentioned in your advertising and reservation material.

### Items To consider When Developing House Rules:

- Pets
- Children
- Smoking
- Alcohol
- Check in/check out times
- Keys
- Breakfast hours
- Kitchen privileges
- Housekeeping
- Visitor
- Telephone usage
- Laundry facilities
- Tourist information
- Credit cards/personal checks
- Reservations/cancellations
- Deposits or advanced payment
- Provisions for handicapped guests
- Equipment rentals
- Use of house and ground areas
- Emergencies





Beauguard House, Charleston SC  
<http://www.charlestonbedbreakfast.com/>



## IV. OPERATION: Developing an Operations Plan

To develop an operation plan, you should begin by deciding the following:

- The activities to be carried out in the operation of the business.
- Who will carry out these activities. (This decision is very important. Couples and families should work out who will do what in advance.)
- What talents are necessary to make the business operate smoothly.
- How any inadequacies will be handled.
- The objectives for the major activities, and the policies and procedures for reaching them.

In a small B&B business you are both manager and employee. As manager, you plan, implement, direct policies and procedures, and evaluate the effectiveness of the business operation. However, as employee, you are also responsible for carrying out the following activities involved in running the B&B business:

- **Front Desk Operation:** Taking reservations, registering guests, receiving payment and handling complaints.
- **Housekeeping:** Cleaning procedures and schedules for rooms and public areas, cleaning materials, room furnishings, guest supplies, laundry supplies and facilities, and contract cleaning.
- **Food Preparation and Service:** Menu, food preparation and storage, kitchen supply inventory, service location, meal hours, dishwashing equipment, sanitation policies and health regulations.
- **Selling Your Area:** Promoting area attractions for the entertainment of your guests.
- **Extras:** Guest relations and amenities.

## **A. Front Desk Operation**

Ensure that everything is ready for the arrival of guests.

Take the time to welcome your guests upon their arrival. Enquire about your brochure and other information to get feedback as to whether it was helpful. Escort your guests to their bedroom, and provide assistance with their luggage.

Invite your guests into your living room following their “settling-in period,” and offer them a complimentary beverage such as coffee or tea. This casual meeting will allow you to:

- Answer any questions regarding directions, attractions, events, etc. in your area.
- Discuss breakfast hours. If you provide a choice of breakfast items, this will be a good time to ask your guests what they prefer.
- Discuss house rules (smoking, parking, etc.)
- Find out about your guests’ plans. Knowing their plans will allow you to plan your own time. Make suggestions about what to see. (Literature, maps, and brochures about your area should be readily available for them to browse through at their leisure. These are available from your local Chamber of Commerce, Parks, Recreation and Tourism, or Regional Tourism office. See Appendix for addresses.) Always have someone available while your guests are in your home.
- Explain your key policy. Provide a key to the front door to the guests for the duration of their stay. This allows freedom of, movement at minimum inconvenience.
- Register your guest. For the protection of the host, all guests should register upon arrival. Registration should include name and address of party, car license number, and dates of stay. A simple guest register can be a guest book like those commonly used at social functions. These books are available at most card or gift stores.

## **B. Housekeeping**

Standard housekeeping procedures should be followed in cleaning bedrooms and making-up beds.

Fresh bedding and linens should always be provided after guest checkout or every few days if the guests’ stay is for an extended period. Basic housekeeping should always be provided daily.

### **Making the Bed:**

- Strip and shake-out all bed linens to ensure no valuables are left behind by guests.
- Replace mattress pad if badly soiled or stained.
- Spread bottom sheet over pad and smooth it out, tucking both sides under mattress. If fitted sheets are not being used, allow bottom of the sheet to hang free over the foot of the bed.

- Spread top sheet, making sure it is centered and that you will have at least 8 inches to overlap blankets at head.
- Tuck sheet and blankets together under mattress at foot of bed only, making neat “hospital” corners and leave the sides to hang. (Do not tuck top sheet under mattress at sides because the bottom sheet will come loose when the guest pulls down the top sheet and blanket to get into bed.)
- Replace pillow cases, place pillow on bed with open ends toward the outside.
- Cover bed with a clean bedspread or comforter, which should hang evenly around the bed.

### **Dusting:**

Dust build-up can become a serious problem. Dust all woodwork and furniture, picture frames, window sills, clothes rack and shelving, heating/air conditioning units, vents, and other furnishings.

### **Vacuuming:**

Vacuum all carpeted areas. Hardwood floors should be dry-mopped.

### **Furnishings:**

- Wash all ashtrays
- Empty waste basket
- Discard disposable items
- Replenish glasses
- Replace burned-out light bulbs
- Arrange any literature/stationery supplied in drawers
- Adjust curtains/drapes
- Check for proper mechanical function of all items provided
- Replace all used towelings.

**Extending Mattress Life:** To ensure a longer mattress life, turn mattresses over two to three times per year.

**Personal Belongings Left Behind:** In order to ensure that no personal belongings were left behind by departing guests, CHECK: Under beds, inside all drawers, backside, of washroom door, and bathroom cabinets. Make arrangements to return all such items to the guest.

**One Last Look:** After room is cleaned, stand at the door a second, and take a good look around. Correct any discrepancies. Deodorize each room.

### **Cleaning The Bathroom:**

It is important from the health standpoint that bathrooms are kept clean and sanitary at all times. Due to humidity, unsanitary bathrooms quickly become a breeding ground for germs and other harmful bacteria. The following cleaning procedures should be followed on a regular basis:

- The toilet bowl should shine clean with absolutely no sign of staining. Place small amounts of bowl cleaner on swab and clean inside of bowl, let the cleaner stay on for awhile-before flushing, wipe outside of bowl with clean sanitized cloth.

- Sanitize toilet seat, check to ensure that it is not loose-if so, tighten bolts.
- Bathtubs/showers, washbasins and tiles should be cleaned and wiped dry with a sanitized cloth. All chrome should be polished.
- Check and wipe dry inside shower curtain to remove any buildup of soap and stains.
- Clean and polish mirrors, vanity top and under rim of washbasin.
- Arrange clean towels, washcloths, bath mat and soap.
- Check and refill facial tissue and toilet tissue dispensers.
- Mop bathroom floor.

## C. Food Preparation And Service

The objective of developing a food plan is to provide the guest with a memorable culinary experience. A number of factors can add considerably to the guest's enjoyment of the breakfast, such as a pleasant dining atmosphere, attractive food presentation, stimulating conversation, and a unique regional menu.

Always remember that a basic rule in food preparation is to serve hot foods HOT and cold foods COLD. It is also imperative that the kitchen area, the utensils, and the person preparing and serving the food be clean and sanitary.

State and local health regulations will restrict the kinds of food you may serve. Due to the lack of elaborate food preparation facilities, many B&Bs are limited to serving a CONTINENTAL breakfast, which normally includes rolls, fruit, coffee, and juice. However, you can make a continental breakfast distinctive by offering high quality pastry and fresh fruit that are attractively garnished and presented.

In addition to serving breakfast, it is good to have coffee, tea, soft drinks, sherry or wine available to guests when they arrive or throughout the evening. Furthermore, a homemade cake or cookies are greatly appreciated.

### Preparing Breakfast:

Be creative in the planning and development of breakfast menus. Croissants, muffins, and bread rolls can be varied and specialized. A variety of home baked goods, and homemade preserves also provide a nice touch. Garnish the plate with slices of fresh fruit to provide color and fill the plate. It is better to charge a little more and provide a quality breakfast, than to skimp and disappoint your guests. A variety of breakfast menus and ideas may be found in cookbooks. Some are specifically developed for small country inns and B&B operations. Browse through a bookstore or library to obtain new ideas.

### Serving Breakfast:

Take care to create a pleasant breakfast environment for your guests:

- The table should be set with a nice cloth and napkins, and your best china and flatware. Freshly-cut flowers from your garden and crystal glasses for juice provide an elegant touch to any morning meal.

- Serve breakfast in the dining room, not in the kitchen.
- Unless invited by the guests, neither the host nor his/her family should eat with the guests. It is acceptable to join guests for coffee or tea once the meal is concluded.
- When more than one group of guests share the breakfast table, the host should take the time to introduce everyone.
- Breakfast may be served by preparing individual portions for each guest or by letting the guests serve themselves, country style, from dishes centrally placed on the table. You may choose to serve buffet style from a separate table or buffet.
- Ample coffee and tea should always be available.

### **Breakfast in Bed:**

You may choose to provide the option of breakfast in bed to guests celebrating special occasions. (Consider that accidents will occur and permanent food stains may result to comforters, blankets, or carpets.)

## **D. Selling Your Area**

When guests come to your property to stay they may depend on your expertise in determining what they should do for entertainment. As a service to your guests it is important to be aware of all of the different opportunities available in your area. You should make yourself an ambassador for the area. Not only should you be aware of the attractions in your particular town, but within a radius of about 30 miles, as well. Local museums, historic homes, theme parks, zoos, restaurants, state parks, theatres, tours, parks, shopping opportunities, night clubs, hiking trails, tennis, golf, birdwatching, photographic opportunities, anything special in the area should be compiled on a list of “Things To Do” for your guests. Your local Chamber of Commerce, SC Parks, Recreation and Tourism or Regional Tourism Organization are all good resources for information.

Be sure to keep abreast of events and festivals that could be attended. Keep a supply of MAPS and brochures on hand to give to your guests to assist them in planning their activities. Some properties have bicycles available. You may consider assisting your guests in making reservations at restaurants or other attractions.

## **E. Extras**

A word about **SERVICE**: Most of your guests select a Bed and Breakfast or Inn over a standard hotel or motel because they are searching for “something more than the same old thing.” The extras that you provide to enhance their visit are limited only to your imagination. Here are only a few ideas that you may choose to incorporate:

### **SOME “SECRETS” OF GREAT GUEST RELATIONS**

- Greet each visitor with a SMILE!!! 😊
- Present a clean and neat appearance.

- Be attentive and friendly, listen carefully to what visitors say.
- Think of the visitor as a **welcome guest**. Treat them as you would want to be treated.
- Don't be "right," be polite.
- Make a friend.
- Speak of your community with pride. Never be negative.
- Anticipate the needs of your guests and have materials and information on hand.
- Collect menus from popular restaurants to have available.
- Provide a list of churches in the area along with worship service hours.
- If yours is a historic home, guests may be interested in its history and architecture. Keep a write-up handy for them to read.
- Provide a copy of public transportation schedules.
- Provide turn-down service in the evenings, with a candy on the Pillow.
- Follow up visit with personal note, invite them back.

**Amenities** create a sense of luxury, build the image of your B&B, and encourage favorable word-of-mouth advertising. Consider the full range of amenities listed below in relation to the projected image and cost of your B&B.

Adapters	Cotton balls
Aftershave	Courier service
Air freshener	Curling iron
Airport transportation	Departing gift
Antique furnishings	Deodorant
Art gallery	Drinking glasses
Baby strollers	Drinks (complimentary champagne, wine, sherry, coffee, tea, sodas)
Babysitting service	Extension cords
Baggage storage	FAX
Bar	First-aid supplies
Bath salts, bubbles	Flowers
Bathrobes	Fruit basket
Beach towels	Gardens, trails, woodlands
Bicycles, mopeds	Hair conditioner
Boat charters	Hairdryer
Books, library	Hand cream
Brochures	Hobby displays/collections
Candy dish	Homemade items/meals
Card tables	

Cheese tray  
Children's games  
Chocolates  
Clothes brush  
Cologne  
Comforter  
Computers, word-processors  
(in room)  
Corkscrew  
Letter openers  
Limousine service  
Lint removers  
Luggage tags  
Lunch/dinner  
Maps  
Membership in club/fitness center  
Message-taking service  
Mineral water  
Mints/candy on pillow  
Mouthwash  
Nail polish remover  
Newspapers  
Piano  
Pens  
Photocopying  
Picnic basket  
Pillows (extra)  
Playing cards  
Radio  
Raincoat  
Reading material  
Restaurant discounts  
Sachet/potpourri in drawers  
Safe for valuables  
Safety pins  
Secretarial services  
Sewing kits

Hors d'oeuvres  
Hot tub/sauna  
Ice bucket in room  
Insect repellent  
Interpreter  
Iron, ironing board  
Kitchen privileges  
Laundry privileges/service  
Laundry soap, bags  
Shampoo  
Shaving cream  
Shoehorns  
Shoe polish, mitts  
Shoeshine service  
Shopping discounts, gift certificates  
Shower cap  
Sightseeing tours  
Skirt hangers  
Slippers  
Soap  
Special rooms-music, billiard  
Sports equipment  
Spot remover  
Stamps/stationery  
Sunscreen  
Swimming pool  
Tee time reservations for nearby golf  
Television/VCR  
Telex  
Tickets to events  
Toothbrush  
Toothpaste  
Tourist information packets  
Towels (large)  
Typewriters  
Umbrellas  
Wheelchairs





## V. PROMOTION: Developing A Marketing Plan

Serendipity Inn, Myrtle Beach, SC  
<http://www.serendipityinn.com/index.htm>

**Marketing** is simply a way to inform people about what you have to offer, thereby encouraging them to visit your B&B. Always remember “**MARKETING IS MORE THAN ADVERTISING!**”

The success or failure of many businesses is often linked to the operator’s promotional (marketing) effort. Give careful consideration to the development and implementation of a promotional strategy which is realistic in terms of cost, time availability, and overall attainability.

To be successful you must know your market. Thinking that your product will sell itself is the most common marketing misconception of new entrepreneurs.

The key elements in marketing are: **product design, identifying the market, promotion and advertising.**

### PRODUCT DESIGN

A product can be a physical object or a service, such as a Bed & Breakfast. You must be committed to producing and providing a **quality** product or service as discussed in the Development, Administration and Operation chapters.

### IDENTIFYING THE MARKET

After you have planned your product you should know **to whom you are trying to sell.** Is your market individuals, retired couples, business travelers, groups, vacationers, honeymooners? You will also want to determine the income level, location and any other specific characteristics of your potential customers. This will determine how you advertise, where you advertise, and also whether the product is likely to be successful or whether you need to change it.

The customers’ needs, wants, and wishes are very important to the entrepreneur who wants to be successful in the marketplace. Market research has shown that the price tag is NOT the first thing customers notice. First, customers note the product, its general appeal, and their desire to use it. Then they ask the price.

After you have done your market research, you should have a fairly good idea of whether or not your business will succeed. Your research also tells you where and how to promote your product.

Marketing is a **continuous** process that should not be neglected once you have launched your business. If your product is not selling, consider changing the product, the price, the services or special features you offer, the name of your product, your target customers, or your advertising methods. Remember, **flexibility** can keep you in business when your competitors fail.

## PROMOTION AND ADVERTISING

Few products on the market appeal to everyone. Your financial success depends on your appeal to enough customers to cover your expenses and a profit percentage. Establishing your business requires a certain amount of assertive personal selling. **If the public does not know that your facility exists, there will be little demand for it.** Creating public awareness and demand for your product involves commitment to a promotional strategy, and some hard work, especially in the initial years. Careful thought should be given to the development of a descriptive promotional brochure, and the implementation of a marketing strategy which is realistic and cost-effective.

### A. Brochure Development

A brochure advertising your operation will be **THE MOST IMPORTANT PROMOTIONAL ITEM** you can use to build awareness of your bed and breakfast operation. It does not need to be expensive if you keep it simple. Select images and words that will represent your B&B in an accurate and inviting manner. Obtain as many brochures as possible from other bed and breakfast operators, particularly those nearby. Study them carefully and see which appeal to you.

The brochure that you develop should be as informative as possible, without appearing cluttered and distracting. As your major selling tool, the brochure should contain all the information about your facility that a guest requires in order to make an informed decision to stay with you.

As a general rule, the basic brochure should contain:

- Address of facility and names of hosts
- Details about facilities and rates
- Reservation procedure (credit cards accepted)
- List of attractions nearby
- Map of your location
- Addresses of Visitors' Bureaus or Chambers of Commerce (where more information may be obtained about attractions in your area)



The brochure can be distributed locally to hospitals, nursing homes, area chambers of commerce, restaurants, area convention and visitor's bureaus, regional tourism offices, PRT Travel Information Centers, and airports. (See Appendix for list of addresses.) For wider exposure, consider distributing the brochure to B&Bs in adjacent counties and states. It is also the most important piece that you would use in any direct mailing campaign.

## B. Public Relations and Personal Selling Program

Building strong credibility within the community will also help promote your B&B. Many guests are referred by people living in your area. Local residents and businesses like to recommend places that are an asset or a unique feature of the community. **If they believe you are well prepared to offer a pleasant experience, they will recommend you.** Your community public relations and personal selling program may include the following:

- Make local residents aware that you are offering bed and breakfast. This can be an excellent source of referral business, particularly in smaller communities.
- Support community programs. Become a member of the chamber of commerce, better business bureau, local merchant association and the nearest convention and visitors bureau. Volunteer to give presentations on the B&B business at local clubs and community gatherings. Learn if you can advertise in annual or seasonal mailings. **Request permission to display your brochures.** Become active in civic and community groups and offer your B&B as a meeting place to build rapport and cooperation.
- Work with community, regional and state support groups to develop tourism. Help develop promotional literature on the history, seasonal events, and unique features of your community. Be sure to contact the Regional Tourism Organization in your area and the South Carolina Division of Tourism. The S.C. Division of Tourism produces a statewide brochure listing B&Bs in the state, so be sure that you are listed in the latest publication.
- Work with the PRT Travel Information Centers: Please be sure that each Travel Information Center has a good supply of your brochures. Contact the central office for approval of your brochure and they will advise you on distribution to the centers. (A complete list of these centers is included in the Appendix.) Each center is capable of making reservations for you. Many reservations are made through their “discount coupon” program. This program is offered to travelers requesting assistance with reservations, offering them a discounted rate in properties across the state who participate by offering discounts to be used through the centers. The coupons are featured on a board at each center and the staff makes reservations for the traveler after they have made a selection. This is offered as a FREE service to you and at no charge to the traveler. It is important that the Travel Information Center staff is also familiar with your property. YOU should visit each center, introduce yourself, take them a supply of brochures and invite each staff member to come for a COMPLIMENTARY stay at your B&B.
- PRT FAMS: Contact PRT to advise them that you are willing to participate in FAMS (familiarization tours) that they may be planning in your area. Providing complimentary lunch, room inspections, personal contact, printed information to FAM. participants would be a good marketing investment. Follow up with a letter to each participant telling them that you are glad that they came and that YOU WANT THEIR BUSINESS.
- **Market your B&B through the local press.** Send regular news releases to area newspapers and radio and television stations. Give guest TV and radio appearances describing the amenities of your B&B. Consider hiring a freelance writer to develop articles for submission to regional newspapers. The S.C. Division of Tourism, Communications Services, can assist you in this

endeavor. Some newspapers have a weekly calendar and tourism section that lists the area's lodging accommodations. Finally, develop a press kit including: a black and white photograph, a brief history, and a description of your B&B to give to newspaper reporters and freelance writers. Some regional and local papers may wish to do a human interest feature about your facility which will provide free local publicity.

- Visit large companies, manufacturing plants, regional offices in your area to personally meet the executives. Make them aware that you are in business and can provide quality accommodations for incoming executives. Identify key executive secretaries who are responsible for **making reservations** for business travelers. Establish a program for key secretaries, offering a bonus program as an incentive for bookings. Keep in constant touch with these contacts, they are your best bet for weekday, repeat business.
- Entertain the key secretaries at a special dinner or drop-in to acquaint them with your property.
- Send out a special Christmas gift or card to the key secretaries with an invitation to spend the night to see what the property offers to the business traveler. This enables the secretaries to recommend a familiar property.
- Cooperate with area businesses. Make personal sales calls on businesspeople, especially restaurant managers, plant managers, personnel directors, stores, purchasing agents, real estate salespeople, gas stations and convenience stores. Follow up each visit with a personal letter. See if they will stock your brochures, as well. Local word-of-mouth referrals are a very solid way to attract guests at little or no cost.
- Contact private citizens and community leaders. Read the local newspaper carefully and make personal calls to local people holding family reunions, weddings, confirmations, bar mitzvahs, and other events where out-of-town guests may be involved. Send out letters of congratulation concerning awards, promotions, and accomplishments to keep your business profile high among community leaders.
- Participate in Community Events. Keep abreast of activities and events in the community, particularly where these activities generate visitor traffic. For example, if an annual sporting event takes place in the community, contact the organizers and request that your facility be listed in their promotional literature as an alternate accommodation.
- Answer inquiries promptly. People who make inquiries are your most promising potential customers. Such inquiries should be answered **promptly**, and with the information requested. You should make it easy for those who inquire to make a reservation by including a phone number they can call collect or a self-addressed, stamped reservation form.



## C. Special Promotions

- Consider offering holiday and weekend packages that include activities such as hiking tours, biking, theatre tickets, fishing, golfing or historic tours. During the off season, advertise special rates in newsletters, newspapers, and regional magazines for families and senior citizens, and offer family and friend promotions to regular clients. Special events and package deals such as these will create interest and generate publicity for your B&B.
- Try to plan special events for each season of the year and encourage local merchants to co-sponsor and promote the events. Nonprofit sponsorship may entitle you to free public service announcements on radio and television.
- Consider donating a free night at your B&B as a prize at fund-raising events.

## D. Newsletters

An important tool for reminding former guests about your B&B and generating repeat business is the newsletter. Ideally, a newsletter will contain information on the accommodations offered by your B&B, a history of the home, promotional events and package deals, special community attractions, and announcements of improvements or additions to the B&B. You might also consider sending out Christmas cards and other appropriate seasonal greetings to past guests.

## E. Business Cards and Other Promotional Items

Incorporating the name and logo of your B&B on business cards, fact sheets, stationery, and policy sheets is a relatively inexpensive promotional tool. Professional business cards can help establish credibility, while attractive, well written fact sheets can gain exposure and promote the image you have created. Fact sheets can be placed on bulletin boards, handed out to guests, included in mailings, and sent to other B&Bs in your region. Policy sheets posted in each room will outline the rules of your establishment while reminding guests of your business's name and logo. Also consider incorporating the name and logo on in-house items such as informational posters, placemats, and stationery and on complimentary gifts such as matchbooks, pens, and postcards. Making your name and logo as visible as possible will make guests more likely to remember your particular B&B.

## F. Listing the Yellow Pages

If you have a business phone number you are entitled to one free listing in the yellow pages. Because B&Bs are still a relatively uncommon form of lodging, your listing may be most visible in the motel section. The majority of people who consult the yellow pages are passing through town and calling at the last minute to find a place to stay.

## G. Advertising

- **Print advertising** can be a very effective medium in creating awareness among buyers. (Remember that advertising is only one of the tools at your disposal. In order to be effective, it should be used in support of other promotional efforts and not stand alone.)

Note that one or two well-placed ads may be more effective than a multitude of scattered ads in a variety of publications. Consideration should be given to advertising in publications which a visitor to the area would consider while looking for overnight accommodations.

When placing a large advertisement give a brief history and description of your B&B in regional newspapers of your major market. Then follow up with a series of smaller reminder ads. You might also evaluate the cost effectiveness of placing small and frequent ads in the classified section under “Bed and Breakfasts” and in the travel sections of regional magazines. Consider purchasing advertising space in local chamber of commerce brochures and specialty publications on local activities such as golfing and hunting. When buying ad space, compare prices based on cost and circulation.

Another consideration is to contact the South Carolina Division of Tourism for its ad campaign schedule and consider advertising where they have selected to advertise the state. This is called “piggy-back advertising.” It compounds the effect of your advertising dollar, gives you greater exposure and could give you a price break by being part of a South Carolina section in a publication.

- **Listing In Guidebooks:** Listing your B&B in guidebooks is a relatively **simple and inexpensive** way to attract guests, particularly distant customers. The cost ranges from \$15 to \$60 per guidebook. (Some are FREE.) To decide which books you would like to be listed in, browse through the travel section of a bookstore. (See Appendix for a listing of B&B guidebooks.) Ask other B&B operators which ones have proven to be the most effective for them. Select a reasonable number of guidebooks that look attractive and compare them based on the following factors:

- Cost
- Circulation volume
- Market
- Updating frequency
- Membership requirements
- Type of B&B descriptions
- Exclusivity stipulations
- Certain standards that must be met
- Inspection policies



You may also want to inquire about liability and group life insurance policies available to members. Also ask about newsletters and other benefits. Because it may be one to two years before a new or updated guidebook reaches the bookstores, contact the guidebook’s writers before you open.

- **Broadcast Advertising.** Broadcast advertising usually is a more expensive form of advertising. Television and radio are seldom used by a B&B, however, you might consider using it to announce your opening and to promote your B&B early in the busy season. Select a station that more or less shares your target market segment. For radio promotion to be effective, listeners should hear the name of your B&B several times a day during a period of a week. Seek professional advice in writing copy and choosing background music so that you project the image you want.

## **H. Listing with a Reservation Service Organization (RSO)**

B&B Reservation Service Organizations maintain and publish listings of B&Bs in various locations that travelers may consult when deciding on lodging. The B&B host pays a listing fee of anywhere from \$5 to \$200. **RSOs do charge a commission**, usually twenty percent of the guest’s lodging fee. The commission

is charged for repeat guests as well. In exchange for the fees and commission the RSO screens guests, handles deposits, and provides some publicity. Most arrangements between B&B hosts and an RSO are clearly described in the form of a signed contract. Some RSOs require that your B&B conform to certain standards.

There are many B&B reservations organizations to choose from, so you will want to shop around in selecting the RSO that best suits your needs. (You can obtain a current listing of RSOs from: The American Bed and Breakfast Association, P.O. Box 23486, Washington, D.C. 20008.)

## I. Travel Agents

(Remember that travel agents are **professionals who are paid a commission** per room night that they book in your property.)

Target travel agencies in nearby large cities for a sales blitz. (Charlotte and Atlanta, for example) Get a phone book from the targeted cities or contact their state tourism offices and request a listing of the travel agencies in their state. Consider a direct mail piece to all agencies offering them a free night stay per travel agency. This will give you an opportunity to have them familiar with your property and better sell the area as a destination. Send travel agents information on the area as well as a cover letter. Consider offering a travel agent's discount to any other agents from their agency who wish to come. They may not recommend your property if they are not familiar with it. (This could be done in the form of a postcard with a picture of your property on the front, if you want to watch costs.)



The Ashley Inn Bed & Breakfast  
Charleston, SC

<http://www.Charleston-sc-inns.com/>

## J. Group Tours

(NOTE: Marketing to attract groups should only be attempted by inns with at least twenty-four rooms.)

South Carolina PRT maintains the names of group tour operators who are presently coming to or through South Carolina if you decide to do a **direct mail** piece.

### **Include:**

- a cover letter inviting the tour operator for a COMPLIMENTARY night's stay to "experience" your property and see your area.
- a brochure on your area as well as the brochure and fact sheet of your property.
- The most important information you need to include are one-night and two-night packages which they could offer to their clients. This should include a suggested itinerary, PRICES, (including tax and gratuities) and booking procedures. The price should be a NET price as most tour operators add a commission.

Generally, tour operators will RARELY bring a group somewhere that they have not personally stayed before ... they have to sell their own programs and answer the questions of their travelers. PERSONAL calls need to follow-up each possible lead. just sending them a brochure WILL NOT sell your property! They HAVE to have the packages.

Contact the South Carolina Division of Tourism's Group Tour Marketing Division (803/ 734-0128) and ask to receive their contact lists from the National Tour Association, American Bus Association and Travel South Market Places. These are lists of tour operators that they have met with who have expressed an interest in bringing group tours into the state. These tour operators should receive the information described above from you as well.



[The Cannonboro, Charleston, SC](#)



## VI. APPENDIX

### Bed and Breakfast guidebooks:

The Schell Haus Bed & Breakfast  
Pickens, SC

<http://www.bbonline.com/sc/schellhaus/>

Following is a partial list of guidebooks that you may choose to contact for listing your property. This is by no means a complete list. Browse in your local bookstore to find names of others and to get an idea of what they are like. Most of the costs range from \$0 to \$50, according to their circulation. Each have different publishing dates, and **their copy deadline is usually six months prior to their publishing deadline. CONTACT THEM EARLY!**

*Bed and Breakfast USA: A Guide to Tourist Homes and Guest Houses*, Betty Rundback and Nancy Ackerman, \$10.95, 725 pages, illustrated, Sandy Soule, Editor, E.P. Dutton, 2 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016 (212/725-1818) Contains listings in all 50 states, plus Canada. A chapter on how to start your own B&B is included as well as sixteen pages of mouth-watering recipes from B&Bs around the U.S.

*The Official Bed & Breakfast Guide, For the US and Canada*, Phyllis Featherston and Barbara Ostler, \$13.95, illustrated, 148 East Rocks Road, P.O. Box 332, Norwalk, CT 06852 (203/847-6196).

*Country Inns and Back Roads*, Jerry Levitin, (formerly Norman T. Simpson) illustrated, 80 pages, \$4.95 Harper and Rowe Publishers, 10 East 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022 (707/255-2211).

*Bed & Breakfast American Style*, Jerry Levitin, (formerly Norman T. Simpson) Harper and Rowe Publishers, 10 East 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022 (707/255-2211).

*Complete Guide to Bed & Breakfasts, Inns & Guesthouses*, Pamela Lanier, John Muir Publications, Santa Fe, NM 87504.

*Bed And Breakfast North America*, Norma Buzan, Betsy Ross Publications, 3057 Betsy Ross Drive, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48013 (313/646-5357). Guidebook of B&Bs featuring specialty recipes from each. You may get some good ideas for breakfasts!

## **Additional books that may be useful to you:**

*How To Open A Country Inn*, Karen L. Etsell. The Berkshire Traveler Press. Stockbridge, Massachusetts 01262.

*Start Your Own Bed & Breakfast Business-Earn Cash From Your Extra Room*, Beverly Mathews, \$5.95, 1.80 pages, Pocket Books, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020.

*So You Want To Be An Innkeeper*, Mary Davies, Pat Hardy, JoAnn Bell and Susan Brown. 101 Productions of San Francisco, 228 pages, order from Inn Review, PO Box 1789, Kankakee, IL 60901.

*How to Start Your Own Bed & Breakfast*, Mary Zandec. Golden Hill Press, Box 122, Spencetown, New York 12165.

*How to Open and Operate a Bed & Breakfast Home*, Jan Stankus. 290 pgs, Globe Pequot Press, \$12.50.

*Open Your Own Bed & Breakfast*, Barbara Notarius and Gail Brewer, 230 pgs, John Wiley and Sons, Business Law/General Books Division, 605 Third Ave, New York, NY 10520.

*Innkeeping Supplies and More Innkeeping Supplies, New Sources & Resources*, Beverly Mathews, \$5.00 Rocky Point Press, PO Box 602, Santa Monica, California 90406. These two booklets feature information about products for inns.

*How to Make Money at Innkeeping*, Michael Vincent Kuntz, Southern Hospitality Concept, Inc., 142-02 Eighty-fourth Drive, Briarwood, NY 11435. Details budgeting, housekeeping, front desk, food and restaurant departments, etc. for medium to large-sized operations.

*Guest Services-500 Ideas*, Innkeeping World, P.O. Box 84108, Seattle, WA 98124. Creative ideas from the "big guys" in the hotel industry. Unique services and amenities, adaptable to inns.

*Secrets of Entertaining from America's Best Innkeepers*, Gail Greco, Globe Pequot Press, \$12.95. Contains wonderful tips on a variety of subjects. Efficient ways and time-saving ideas on how to clean house. Example: Glassware clouded by mineral buildup will come clean when soaked in a half gallon of water combined with a few denture-cleaning tablets!

## **Associations:**

**The American Bed & Breakfast Association**, 16 Village Green, Suite 203, Crofton, MD 21114 (301/261-0180) Membership of \$150.00, newsletter, guidebook published, also other publications and information for members.

**Association of Professional Innkeepers, International**, JoAnn M. Bell, Executive Director, P.O. Box 90710, Santa Barbara, California 93190 (805/965-0707) Membership offers: newsletter, workshops, technical assistance, index of members.

## Resources:

“Innkeepers Guide To Travel Editors,” Beverly Mathews, \$7.50, Rocky Point Press, PO Box 602, Santa Monica, California 90406. Contains an updated, current list of travel editors of hundreds of publications. A valuable resource for creating free publicity.

## South Carolina Tourism Regions:

For tourism promotional purposes the state of South Carolina has been divided into ten tourism regions. Each tourism region is named and comprised of several counties. The tourism regions are:

**Olde English District:** Chester, Chesterfield, Fairfield, Kershaw, Lancaster, Union and York counties. This region is located in the mid-northern border of the state. The area offers more than 25 festivals and special events, over 50 historic attractions, eight state parks, a dozen golf courses and more than 32,000 acres of lake surfaces. Contact: Olde English District Tourism Commission, P.O. Box 1440, Chester, SC 29706, (803/385-6800).

**Historic Charleston:** Historic Charleston, comprised of Charleston and Dorchester counties, is located on the southeastern coast of the state. Seventy-three buildings in this area are pre-Revolutionary, 136 are late 18th century and more than 600 others were built by the 1840's. Carriage rides down cobblestone streets, historic homes, gardens and buildings from the Colonial era, posh resort islands and Southern hospitality make this region one of the top destinations of out-of-state visitors in South Carolina. Contact: Charleston Trident Convention & Visitors Bureau, P.O. Box -975, Charleston, SC 29402, (803/5 7 7 -25 10).

**Lowcountry and Resort Islands:** The Lowcountry and Resort Islands, comprised of Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton and Jasper counties, are located along the southern tip of the state bordering the Atlantic Ocean and Georgia. Sea marshes, history, secluded beaches, first-class resorts on semi-tropical islands, professional golf and tennis tournaments make the Lowcountry and Resort Islands a unique area of the state. Contact: Lowcountry Council of Governments Tourism Program, PO Box 98, Yemassee, SC 29945, (803/726-5536).

**Santee Cooper Country:** Santee Cooper Country, comprised of Berkeley, Calhoun, Clarendon, Orangeburg, and Sumter Counties, is centered around the Santee Cooper Lakes (Lakes Marion and Moultrie) in the mideastern portion of the state. More than 17 1,000 acres of fresh water lakes, world-class fishing, golf courses, Revolutionary War sites, old plantations and gardens attract thousands of visitors to this area every year. Contact: Santee Cooper Counties Promotion Commission, PO Drawer 40, Santee, SC 29142, (803/ 854-2131).

**Pee Dee Country:** Pee Dee Country, comprised of Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Lee, Marion, Marlboro and Williamsburg counties, is located in the northeast portion of the state. Situated in the heart of the state's agricultural belt, the region is famous for its tobacco auctions and endless fields of cotton. Visitors also find that the area has its share of historic sites, beautiful gardens, colorful festivals, museums, and recreational activities. **Contact:** Pee Dee Tourism Commission, PO Box 3093, Florence, SC 29502 (803/669-0950).

**Capital City and Lake Murray Country:** Capital City and Lake Murray Country, comprised of Lexington, Newberry, Richland and Saluda counties, is located in the middle of the state surrounding Lake Murray. Thousands of tourists visit the State House, universities and colleges, art galleries, museums and the nationally-acclaimed zoo. They also enjoy the recreational activities of Lake Murray. Contact: Lake Murray Tourism & Recreation Association, PO Box 210096, Columbia, SC 29221, (803/781-5940).

**Thoroughbred Country:** Thoroughbred Country, comprised of Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg and Barnwell counties, is located on the mid-western border of the state. Tourists visit Thoroughbred Country to experience the rolling farmland, horse training and racing, peach orchards, old town squares and festivals. Contact: Lower Savannah Council of Governments/ Thoroughbred Country, PO Box 850, Aiken, SC 29802 (803/649-7981).

**Old Ninety Six:** Old Ninety Six, comprised of Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, and McCormick counties is located in the western border of the state. Historic homes and churches, a Revolutionary battle site, an opera house, parks on lakes with fishing and boating make Old Ninety Six a unique area of the state which attracts thousands of visitors every year. Contact: Old 96 District Tourism Commission, PO Box 448, Laurens, SC 29360 (803/984-2233)

**Discover Upcountry Carolina:** Discover Upcountry Carolina, comprised of Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens and Spartanburg counties, is located in the Northwest corner of the state. Discover mountain peaks, whitewater rafting, art galleries, factory outlet stores, backpacking trails and the Cherokee Foothills Scenic Highway. Contact: Discover Upcountry Carolina Association, PO Box 3132, Greenville, SC 29602, (803/233-2690). Anderson, Oconee and Pickens counties, also contact: Pendleton District Historical and Recreational Association, PO Box 565, Pendleton, SC 29670, (803/646-3782).

**Grand Strand:** The Grand Strand, South Carolina's most popular vacation spot, stretches over 60 miles of beaches along the Atlantic Ocean in Horry and Georgetown Counties. The gently sloping beaches are some of the widest on the East coast-perfect for shell hunting, fishing, swimming, sunbathing, and strolling. The Grand Strand is known for its golf courses, with over 60 courses available for play in the area. Historic lowcountry homes, churches, beautiful gardens and shopping all abound along the coast. Contact: Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 2115, Myrtle Beach, SC 29578-2115, (803/626-7444) also contact: Georgetown County Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 1776, Georgetown, SC 29442 (803/546-8436 or 800/ 777-7705).



Thomas Lamboll House  
Charleston, SC

<http://www.lambollhouse.com/home.htm>

## South Carolina Travel Information Centers

### South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism

The Travel Information Centers are staffed by the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism. These centers are located on all interstates coming in the state and on other major highways. An extensive display of literature is available on accommodations and attractions to give travelers an opportunity to see what is available. As an added service, a complimentary reservation service is available for accommodations within the state. The centers will gladly stock a supply of your approved brochure to assist visitors in making reservations at your property.

**BEFORE SENDING ANY LITERATURE TO THE CENTERS A SAMPLE MUST BE SENT TO THE CENTRAL OFFICE FOR APPROVAL AND FOR MAILING INSTRUCTIONS. PLEASE CONTACT THE MANAGER OF VISITOR SERVICES, PRT, 1205 PENDLETON STREET, COLUMBIA, SC 29201 BEFORE TAKING ANY ACTION. (803/734-0125)**



Fantasia Bed & Breakfast, Charleston, SC  
<http://bnblist.com/sc/fantasia/fantasia.html>



**TELEPHONE RESERVATION REQUEST**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ARRIVAL DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_ VIA: \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTURE DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_ VIA: \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF BEDROOM: \_\_\_\_\_ NO. OF PERSONS: \_\_\_\_\_

RATE QUOTED: \_\_\_\_\_ DEPOSIT REQUESTED (DATE) \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT OF DEPOSIT: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE RECEIVED: \_\_\_\_\_

CONFIRMATION MAILED (DATE): \_\_\_\_\_

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS & ARRANGEMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Abingdon Manor, Latta SC

<http://bnblist.com/sc/abingdon/abingdon.html>

**DEPOSIT RECEIPT & RESERVATION CONFIRMATION**

TO: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We are pleased to confirm receipt of your deposit in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

to cover the following reservation:

ARRIVAL DATE \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTURE DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF ROOM: \_\_\_\_\_ # OF PERSONS: \_\_\_\_\_

DAILY RATE INCLUDING BREAKFAST: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL COST OF ACCOMMODATIONS: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ X Days = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

MINUS DEPOSIT: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT DUE ON ARRIVAL: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER ARRANGEMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**DEPOSIT REFUND POLICY:**

- Full refund up to 14 days before arrival date
- Full refund minus \$10.00 administration fee up to 7 days before arrival date
- No refund if-cancelled Less than 7 days before arrival date

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\_\_\_\_\_ Host's Name , \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

# RESERVATION SHEET

Month \_\_\_\_\_

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

References and information from the following excellent publications was incorporated into this manual:

**“Developing a Bed and Breakfast Business Plan,”** Robert D. Buchanan, Extension Specialist, Purdue University and Robert D. Espeseth, University of Illinois, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant Program, IL-IN SG-882,300 February 88, COMM-NA 85AA DSG0830N.

**“Guidelines For Development And Operation of a Bed & Breakfast Home in Alberta,”** Development Division, Alberta Tourism, 16th Floor 10025 Jasper Ave., Edmonton, Alberta T5 J 3Z3

**Bed and Breakfast List of South Carolina:** <http://bnblist.com/sc/sc.htm>

**Pamela Lanier’s Travel Guide, B&B’s in SC:** <http://www.travelguides.com/inns/full/SC/>

**South Carolina Directory of B&B’s:** <http://www.virtualcities.com/ons/sc/sconsdex.htm>

**South Carolina Bed & Breakfast Association:** <http://www.usagetaways.com/sc/scbba/index.html>



Pettigru Place Bed & Breakfast  
Greenville, SC

<http://bnblist.com/sc/pettigru/>



The Strom Thurmond Institute of Government and Public Affairs is Public Service Activity (PSA) of Clemson University. The Institute conducts applied research and service in public policy areas, drawing on the expertise of Clemson University faculty, staff and students. The Institute also enhances awareness of current public policy issues on the campus and throughout the state and region through informal and formal educational programs

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# Starting a Bed & Breakfast Business

## GETTING STARTED

Are you thinking about converting your home into a Bed & Breakfast (B&B) business? There are several reasons why people choose to open a B&B --- supplemental income, restoration of a historic residence, preservation of a family home or farm, tax benefits. Whatever your reason, there are many issues that you need to think about and plan for just as you would for any business venture.

### **Do I Have What It Takes?**

First and foremost, do you or more importantly does your family have what it takes to own and operate a B&B? Sit down with all family members and discuss the answers to the following questions:

- Does the family enjoy meeting, talking, and interacting with people?
- Is the family trusting of others?
- Is the family comfortable with having and entertaining strangers in the home?
- Is the family comfortable with all types of people from different cultures and socioeconomic backgrounds?
- Is the family calm and relaxed around children?
- Does the family mind giving up their privacy?
- Does the family like to cook, clean, and keep the home neat?

If the answers to these questions are an enthusiastic "yes," then you and your family might prove to be successful B&B owners-operators. If the response is less than positive, you should reconsider opening a B&B.

It is important to understand that unless you are located in a popular tourist destination area and have more than just a couple of rooms to book, it will be difficult to make much money in a B&B business venture. From a financial standpoint, it may be necessary to consider additional ways to generate revenue from your B&B. There are other typical ways to add-on income from your B&B, these include opening a full scale restaurant in the facility that is open to the public for lunch and/or dinner; catering events on and/or off premises; renting facility for special events (such as receptions, retreats, etc.); and selling retail products (such as specialty food products, soaps/lotions, candles, T-shirts, etc.).

### **What Will It Cost?**

The initial cost of going into a business is your start-up costs. It usually ends up costing a lot more than you first anticipate, that is why it is so important to actually put a pencil and paper to it --- so you will have an accurate picture of the amount of money you will need to get started. Costs to consider may include the following:

- renovations (electrical, plumbing, kitchen, landscaping, fixtures, security system, etc.)
- interior decoration (painting, wallpapering, furniture, lighting, etc.)
- linens (bed and table)
- towels
- dishes and utensils
- smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers, and other emergency equipment

- signage
- promotion and advertising (brochures, ads, etc.)
- permits and licenses (MS Business Registration, local privilege or business license, and MS food service permit)
- insurance (liability, medical, property, workers comp, etc.)
- telephone and answering service/machine
- office equipment and supplies (front desk, computer, copier, fax machine, etc.)
- reservation service(s)

Your start-up list may include more or less depending on your facility. The bottom line is that you need to know what the 'bottom line' is in terms of the dollars it will take to get the business started.

#### **Do I Need Any Special Permits/Licenses?**

Early in the planning process, check the local zoning, fire safety codes, and business permit requirements you must comply with at the appropriate agencies. At the state level you will need to complete a Mississippi Business Registration Application ([FORM 70-001-00-1](#)), which can be obtained from the [Mississippi State Tax Commission](#) (601/923-7000); obtain a [MS Food Service Permit](#) (not all B&B's must have this --- you need to check to see if you do or don't); and complete [Food Safety Certification](#). At the federal level you will need an [Employer's Identification Number](#) (EIN) if you have one employee or more. Contact the [IRS](#) to obtain a federal EIN (telephone 800/829-3676).

It is also important that you understand at the front end, all of your tax obligations as a self-employed business owner and employer. The IRS resources listed below will assist you with this.

#### **OPERATING PLAN**

Once you have made the decision to open a Bed & Breakfast (B&B), it is essential that you develop an operating plan for the business to insure that it will run smoothly. Included in the operating plan are guidelines and procedures for handling the day-to-day operation of the business, including policies and procedures, finances, facility maintenance, food preparation/service, and guest relations.

#### **Policies and Procedure**

*Reservations* --- The telephone is the lifeline to your business because this is the primary way customers will make contact with your B&B. It is important that the telephone lines are kept open and that someone is available to answer questions and take reservations. If this is going to create a family problem, it may be necessary to install a separate telephone line for the business. In the event that no one is at home to answer calls, an answering machine with a professional sounding message needs to be activated. Calls should be returned promptly.

You should develop some type of reservation system that works best for your B&B. When a reservation request is received (by telephone, mail, or e-mail), if the date(s) are available, a reservation form should be completed. Customers need to be advised that reservations will be confirmed only with a deposit (by credit card, check, or money order). Once the deposit is received, written confirmation should be forwarded to the customer (by mail, e-mail, or fax). The confirmation should include information regarding your cancellation/refund policy. It is also nice to send directions and/or map to the B&B along with the confirmation, especially if it is in an out-of-the way location. Some B&B's will also include a brochure outlining guest services, check-in/check-out times, final payment, meal times, local tourist information, and any other information that guests need to know about ahead of time.

*House Rules* --- Since B&B's generally operate in a more intimate manner and in closer proximity to the family, it is important that guests know what is and what is not acceptable to you. You and your family need to set guidelines for the following and communicate those guidelines in an effective, yet tactful manner to your guests:

- Pets (yours and theirs)
- Telephone usage
- Kitchen privileges
- Use of television/radio
- Smoking restrictions
- Laundry privileges
- Use of alcoholic beverages

- Keys
- Children (yours and theirs)
- Use of home and grounds
- Visitors
- Parking
- Etc.

### **Finances**

Keeping track of the financial health of your business is essential to its long-term survival. Begin by implementing a good record keeping system. There are many excellent small business record keeping software packages on the market. Using computer technology to manage your business finances will save you a lot of time and money. However, the "old fashioned way" of keeping records by hand in a ledger will work just as well. The bottom line is --- implement some type of system and stick with it!

A good system will help you keep up with your operating expenses, which begin the day you open for business. These expenses include maintenance, utilities, office supplies, food & beverage, salary, wages and employee benefits, mortgage, licenses/permits, advertising/promotion, professional services (attorney, accountant), insurance, reservation service/travel agent fees, association dues, guest supplies, etc. From your records, you should be able to determine a figure for your average monthly operating expenses. You should then compare this figure to the revenue generated from your business to assess the financial health of the business on a regular basis.

Your record keeping system should also help you determine the taxes you must pay (employee, income, etc.). Refer to the IRS tax information resources listed below for more detailed information on business taxation.

### **Facility Maintenance**

Research has shown that first impressions are indeed lasting impressions. The overall appearance of your B&B inside and outside is important. It should be neat, clean, and inviting --- it should make a guest excited to be there and want to come back again! Housekeeping standards should be implemented for guest bedrooms and bathrooms, as well as for the rest of the home.

### **Food Preparation/Service**

Remember that "breakfast" is an integral part of a B&B, therefore it deserves special attention. Your food plan should be well thought out and cover every detail of the meal including types of food (continental or full), food presentation, serving location (kitchen, dining room, in bed, terrace, etc.), table setting (dishes, utensils, linens, fresh flowers, etc.), serving hours, special diet requests, and cleanliness of preparation and serving areas. If meals in addition to breakfast are served, the same attention to detail is required. Be creative in the planning and serving of your meals --- delight your guests, don't disappoint them!

[NOTE: Depending on your particular business, you may need to obtain a [Mississippi Food Service Permit](#) (not all B&B's must have this --- you need to check to see if you do or don't); and may need to complete a [Food Safety Certification](#) course.]

### **Guest Relations**

The keyword here is provide your guests with the "extras." The majority of people who stay in B&B's rather than motels or hotels do so because they want something special --- not the same old thing. It should begin the moment they arrive and follow through until the time they depart --- your guests should be made to feel extra special. Many B&B's charge room rates well above the going rate for nearby motels or hotels --- if you charge more, your guests will expect more and it is up to you to provide the extra service they are seeking. Some extras to think about:

- Airport transportation
- Antique furnishings
- Baby stroller
- Bath products (salts, bubbles, soaks)
- Bathrobe
- Beach/pool towels
- Bicycle
- Books/videos

- Candy
- Clothes brush
- Computer
- Cotton balls
- Down comforter/pillows
- Extension cord
- Fax machine
- Fishing gear
- Flowers
- Fruit basket
- Games
- Hair dryer/curling iron
- Hair products (shampoo, conditioner, spray)
- Hand lotion
- Mail service
- Maps
- Mineral water
- Mouthwash
- Nail polish remover
- Newspapers
- Photocopying
- Picnic basket
- Rain poncho
- Safety pins
- Sewing kit
- Shower cap
- Slippers
- Soaps
- Stationary/postcards
- Sunscreen
- Swimming pool
- Television/VCR
- Tooth brush/paste
- Tourist information
- Umbrella
- Wheelchair

Follow-up is important to future business. Have a guest evaluation card in each room to be filled out before they leave or simply ask them about their stay --- What did they like the most? What could be done better next time? Send a postcard or personal note to their home a couple of weeks after each guest's stay, thanking them for their business and inviting them back.

### **MARKETING**

Two of the biggest mistakes new business owners often make are 1) thinking that everyone will want to buy what they are selling, and 2) thinking that their product will sell itself. A good marketing plan will help eliminate both mistakes. The key elements of marketing are knowing the product and/or service you are selling, identifying the market or target customer, and then promoting/and advertising to that target customer so they will buy the product and/or service --- and in this case the product and/or service is your B&B.

### **Knowing Your Product/Service**

In a B&B business you are primarily selling lodging or overnight accommodations. However, there are other ways to add-on income from your B&B, these include opening a full scale restaurant in the facility that is open to the public for lunch and/or dinner; catering events on and/or off premises; renting facility for special events (such as receptions, retreats, etc.); and selling retail products (such as specialty food products, soaps/lotions, candles, T-shirts, etc.). These add-ons become part of what you are selling. It is important to

understand exactly what you are selling and in most cases it is much more than just a single item.

### **Identifying Your Market**

The customers' needs and wants are very important to the entrepreneur who wants to be successful in the marketplace. But first, you have to "know thy customer and know thy customer well! A good place to start is with your marketing plan, and a good place to start your marketing plan is with the answers to the following questions:

- Are the trends right?  
Are you located in a vacation destination spot?  
Are you a convenient travel stop for business travelers?  
Are you located in a rural area with no or limited local lodging accommodations?
- Is the idea realistic?  
Can you operate a B&B the way you want to and make enough money at it to keep it going?  
Can the family cope with this type of business?
- Would it be worth it if the business succeeds?  
What are your expectations from your B&B --- part time supplemental income or a full time job and income?  
Are you ready and able to handle success and all the work that comes along with it?
- Who is the customer?  
Individuals, retired couples, business travelers, groups, vacationers, honeymooners?  
What is the primary age group - young adults, middle-agers, senior citizens?  
What is income level - B&Bs that provide special services often cater to higher income levels, while others cater to the budget conscience?
- Where is the market?  
Where do they live - where are they coming from to stay at your B&B?
- How many people will actually purchase?  
Are there enough potential customers out there that even would consider staying at a B&B in your location?
- How many people will purchase product from you?  
How many of these people will stay at your B&B?  
What makes your B&B better than the competition --- what gives your business the competitive edge?

### **Promoting and Advertising Your Business**

In order to bring customers into your business, they have to know you exist. Creating public awareness and demand for your product or service involves a commitment to promoting and advertising it. A brochure about your B&B will be the single most important promotional tool you can use to build awareness of your operation.

The brochure needs to be well done. It does not have to be expensive, but it must be good. If you do not have a good working knowledge of the elements of art and principles of design, then you may need to hire a graphic artist to do it for you. The brochure can be distributed locally to chambers of commerce, restaurants, convention/visitors bureaus, Mississippi Welcome Centers, airports, etc. In some cases you may need to distribute the brochure to similar locations and to B&Bs in adjacent states.

Additional methods to consider for promoting your B&B include:

- Building strong credibility within the community. Many guests are referred by people living in your area. Local residents and businesses like to recommend places that are an asset or a unique feature of the community.
- Making local residents aware that you are offering bed and breakfast. This can be an excellent source of referral business, particularly in smaller communities.
- Supporting community programs. Become a member of the chamber of commerce, better business bureau, local merchant association, and the nearest convention/visitors bureau.
- Working with community, regional and state support groups to develop tourism. Help develop promotional literature on the history, seasonal events, and unique features of your community. Be

sure to contact the tourism organization in your area and the [Mississippi Division of Tourism](#). The [Mississippi Division of Tourism](#) produces a [statewide listing of B&Bs](#) in Mississippi.

- Working with the Mississippi Welcome Centers. Supply each Welcome Center with your brochures. Each center is capable of making reservations for you. Contact Rosie Herron-Williams at 601/358-3297 for information about this program.
- Working through the local press. Send regular news releases to area newspapers and radio and television stations. Consider hiring a freelance writer to develop articles for submission to regional newspapers. Some newspapers have a weekly calendar and tourism section that lists the area's accommodations. Some regional and local papers may wish to do a human-interest feature about your facility, which will provide free local publicity.
- Contacting companies and manufacturing plants in your area to make them aware that you are in business and can provide quality accommodations for incoming business travelers.
- Cooperating with area businesses. Call on local business people, especially restaurant managers, plant managers, personnel directors, stores, purchasing agents, real estate salespeople, gas stations and convenience stores. See if they will stock your brochures, as well. Local word-of-mouth referrals are a very solid way to attract guests at little or no cost.
- Contacting private citizens and community leaders. Read the local newspaper carefully and make personal calls to local people holding family reunions, weddings, confirmations, and other events where out-of-town guests may be involved. Send out letters of congratulation concerning awards, promotions and accomplishments to keep your business profile high among community leaders.
- Participating in community events. Keep abreast of activities and events in the community, particularly where these activities generate visitor traffic.
- Answering inquiries promptly. People who make inquiries are your most promising potential customers. Such inquiries should be answered promptly, and with the information requested.
- Developing a logo for your B&B. Use the logo on such things as business cards, brochures, stationary, T-shirts, "give-aways" or complimentary gifts, signage, matchbooks, pens and pencils, advertisements, etc.

Advertising can be an effective promotional tool. It should be used in support of other promotional efforts and not stand-alone. The traditional ways of advertising may be beneficial to your B&B --- newspaper, magazine, radio, television, direct mail, outdoor signs, Internet, and word-of-mouth. You will need to assess the situation and determine what form or forms of advertising will be most beneficial to your B&B. The key to advertising is to spend your advertising dollars on the most effective way to reach your target customer.

#### **Other Considerations**

Other avenues to consider include:

- Listing your B&B in a B&B guidebook. Check bookstores for guidebooks, there are many.
- Participating in the Mississippi Division of Tourism [online Mississippi B&B listings](#). Contact Diana O'Tool at 601/359-3297 for information.
- Listing with a reservation service organization (RSO). You can obtain a current listing of RSOs from [The American Bed and Breakfast Association](#), 1407 Huguenot Road, P O Box 1387, Midlothian, VA 23113, telephone 800/769-2468.
- Contacting travel agents in nearby large cities like New Orleans, Memphis, Birmingham, etc.
- Listing in the yellow pages of the telephone directory.

#### **RESOURCES**

[Mississippi Bed & Breakfast Association](#)

Mr. Loren Quart, President  
601/437-2843

*How to Open a Bed and Breakfast in Your Home* (free publication)

Mississippi Development Authority - Division of Tourism

Diana O'Tool  
601/359-3297

*Mississippi Tour Guide* (free publication - listing of B&B's in MS)

Mississippi Development Authority - Division of Tourism  
Cheryl Eley  
601/359-3297

*Reporting Requirements for Mississippi Small Businesses*

Request a copy of Mississippi from the [Mississippi Development Authority](#) (601/359-3593), or access it [online](#).

[IRS Tax Information](#)

IRS Publication 533 - Self-Employment Tax

IRS Publication 334 - Tax Guide for Small Business

IRS Publication 587 - Business Use of Your Home

IRS Publication 535 - Business Expenses

[Basic Business Start-Up Guide](#)

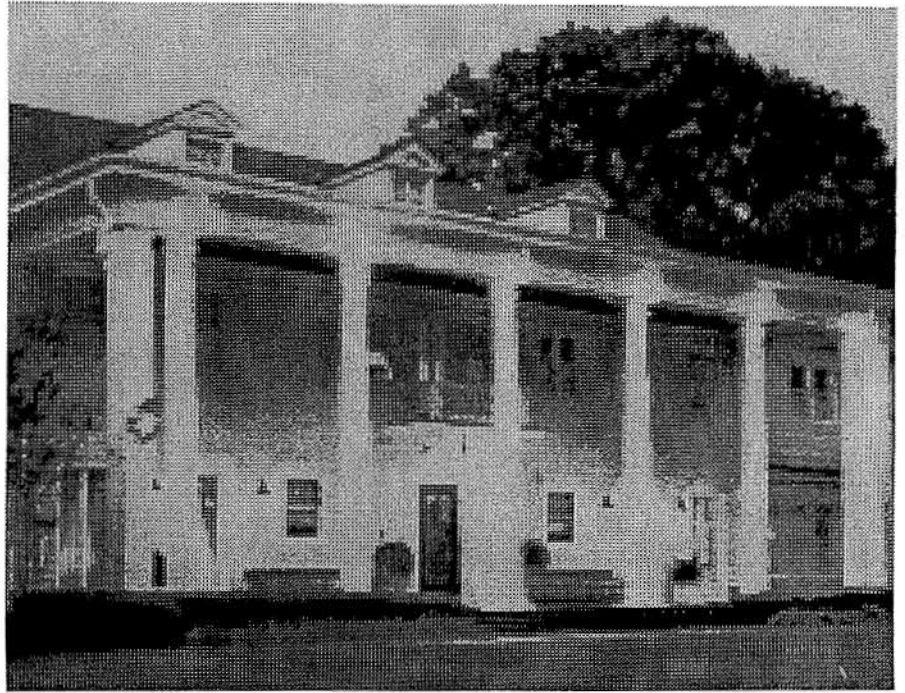
Mississippi State University Extension Service

Mississippi  
Department of  
Economic and  
Community  
Development Tourism  
Welcome Center  
Brochure Policy

Brochure Distribution  
Policy Procedure

Those desiring to have a travel-related publication distributed in the Mississippi Welcome Centers should make a written request with twelve (12) finished sample copies of the publication to Rosie Herron, Mississippi Division of Tourism Development, Post Office Box 849, Jackson, Mississippi 39205. If a publication is approved for placement in the centers, a list of center addresses and a recommended quantity for each center will be sent to you. The brochures should be sent directly to each center according to these quantity recommendations.

The quantity enclosed should be listed both outside and inside the package. Brochure approval must be renewed every two years and whenever any printing change occurs. No brochure will be placed in centers without prior approval.



## *Mississippi Tourism Offices*

Aberdeen Visitors Bureau  
Post Office Box 288  
Aberdeen, Mississippi 39730  
(601) 369-6488  
1-800-634-3538  
FAX: (601) 369-6489

Bay St. Louis Tourism Commission  
Post Office Box 2550  
Bay St. Louis, Mississippi 39521-2550  
(601) 467-6252

Canton Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Post Office Box 53  
Canton, Mississippi 39046  
(601) 859-1307  
1-800-844-3369  
FAX: (601) 859-4379

Clarksdale-Coahoma County Chamber  
& Industrial Foundation  
and Tourism Commission  
Post Office Box 160  
Clarksdale, Mississippi 38614-0160  
(601) 627-7337  
FAX: (601) 627-1313

Cleveland Chamber of  
Commerce/Tourism  
Post Office Box 490  
Cleveland, Mississippi 38732-0490  
(601) 843-2712  
FAX: (601) 843-2718

Columbus-Lowndes Convention and  
Visitors Bureau  
Post Office Box 789  
Columbus, Mississippi 39703  
(601) 329-1191  
1-800-327-2686  
FAX: (601) 329-8969

Corinth Area Tourism Promotion  
Council  
Post Office Box 1089  
Corinth, Mississippi 38835-1089  
(601) 286-3759  
1-800-748-9048  
FAX: (601) 287-5260

Washington County Convention and  
Visitors Bureau  
410 Washington Avenue  
Greenville, Mississippi 38701  
(601) 334-2711  
1-800-467-3582  
FAX: (601) 334-2708

Greenwood Convention & Visitors  
Bureau  
Post Office Drawer 739  
Greenwood, Mississippi 38930  
(601) 453-9197  
(601) 453-9198  
1-800-748-9064  
FAX: (601) 453-5526

Grenada Tourism Commission  
Post Office Box 628  
Grenada, Mississippi 38902-0628  
(601) 226-2571  
1-800-(601) 373-2571  
FAX: (601) 226-9745

Harrison County Tourism Commission  
Post Office Box 6128  
Gulfport, Mississippi 39506  
(601) 896-6699  
1-800-237-9493  
FAX: (601) 896-6796

Hattiesburg Convention and Visitors  
Bureau  
Post Office Box 16122  
Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39404  
(601) 268-3220  
1-800-63-TOURS  
FAX: (601) 268-3249

Hazlehurst Chamber of Commerce  
Post Office Box 446  
Hazlehurst, Mississippi 39083  
(601) 894-3752

DeSoto Council  
2475 Memphis Street  
Hernando, Mississippi 38632-1740  
(601) 429-4414  
FAX: (601) 429-0952

Holly Springs Chamber of Commerce  
154 South Memphis Street  
Holly Springs, Mississippi 38635  
(601) 252-2943