

# *Marketing real estate* for sporting events *A step-by-step guide*



# *Sports Rentals*

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*“We got started with vacation rentals when we saw that hotels were charging \$500 a night for a queen bed 2 miles from campus. We didn’t mind leaving our home for the weekend when we could earn \$2,000.” Jim, South Bend, Indiana*



# *Sports Rentals*

## Introduction



Deciding whether to rent your property for sporting events can be complex. If you are a landlord you may have the alternative of securing more stable rental income from a long term tenant. If you live in your home you may not be sure whether your property would be the right fit for guests who expect the same amenities of a hotel.

We've written this guide because we have experience as landlords, property managers, vacation rental brokers, and residential brokers. If you have questions about real estate we'd like to think we can help! We hope that this presentation is useful to you and helps answer any questions you have at this stage.

Whether you work with us or not, we are more than happy to help you understand this entire process. Feel free to visit our website at [www.GamedayHousing.com](http://www.GamedayHousing.com) to download advertisement templates, sample contracts, and more. As well, we invite you to visit our educational center at [blog.gamedayhousing.com](http://blog.gamedayhousing.com) to learn more about pricing and marketing your home. If you need further help you can contact us via email at [customerservice@gamedayhousing.com](mailto:customerservice@gamedayhousing.com) or phone at 1-(888)-7GAMEDAY.

Thanks,  
The GamedayHousing.com Team

***"You are in complete control of your guest's experience."  
Dan, Athens, Georgia***



# *Sports Rentals*

## The Market



### *The sports vacation rental market presents a unique income opportunity to property owners*

To sports fans, a trip to see their favorite team compete is truly a religious experience. Indeed, for many events such as college football weekends, hundreds of thousands of fans descend upon small towns across America and instantly overwhelm the few hotels and restaurants. As a result, hotel rates for a single or double occupancy room spike from their usual \$50 - \$75 to upwards of \$500 - \$1,000 per night. ***This unique imbalance between supply and demand creates an exciting income opportunity for property owners.***

Hotels are commonly booked up months or years in advance for the hottest games. For these weekends, ***owners can expect to earn upwards of several thousands of dollars for a single two to three night stay.*** As well, owners can receive steady income from less popular game weekends because groups of fans travel to games throughout the season. Finally, by actively marketing their home specifically for sporting events, property owners can also receive added exposure for events such as holidays, weddings, graduations, and reunions.

Despite the real estate boom of the last decade, there remains insufficient hotel vacancy to accommodate travelers. Further, there is no commercial alternative for groups of travelers who wish to lodge together while on vacation. Booking a block of rooms can be exceptionally costly for a group of 10-15 when rates are greater than \$500 a night. We expect that the demand for vacation rental properties will only increase as more groups of fans become aware of this alternative. Later in this presentation we'll discuss exactly how rates are determined for vacation rentals, but first we'd like to discuss the guests who book sports vacation rentals.

***"We'll never book a hotel again when we visit Ann Arbor. Our entire group was able to stay under one roof and we all walked to the game and restaurants."***

***Dan, NYC***



# ***Sports Rentals***

## ***Your Guests***



***Your Guests make this income opportunity possible, so it's helpful to understand them***

*The following three groups make up 95% of sports vacation renters:*

1. Families – They're on a pilgrimage to share their passion for their team and instill tradition in the next generation. They enjoy the fact that the kids can stay back at a home during the game and be easily entertained. It is also helpful that the home can accommodate multiple children and makes it easy for parents to prepare meals at home if they so desire. Parents love that they can host their friends for a mini-reunion party at the home while kids sleep safely in their bedrooms.

2. Reunion groups – For college teams it is extremely common for groups of older alumni and friends to take trips to cheer on their favorite team with childhood friends. These fans may not have seen their friends for 5 – 10 years, and for them this trip is extremely precious. For that reason they want to keep everyone under one roof and reminisce about their past. These groups also host small gatherings at the home.

3. Young Professionals – Vacation rentals are costly. For successful young professionals in their 30's, a vacation rental is an easy way to enjoy a luxurious sports vacation. They prefer vacation rentals to hotels because a home serves as a headquarters for weekend activities.

***"We had a great time and experience with GamedayHousing! We will use them again for our game day needs. Thanks for taking care of us!"***  
***Bryan, Boston***



# *Sports Rentals*

## *Income Considerations*



Rates can vary wildly from \$1,000 per weekend on the low end up to \$5,000+ per weekend on the high end. The best way estimate the rates you can receive is to visit *hotels.com* and check rates and availability on a football weekend. If few hotels are available and rates are greater than \$250 per night you should expect to earn **at least \$1,500 a weekend** for a home that can accommodate 8-10 people. Here are some factors that influence those rates:

1. **Demand** – How popular is the game weekend in general? Clearly a rivalry game draws more fans than an exhibition match.
2. **Location** – How close is the home to the event? If a home is next door to a stadium it can expect to earn double or triple what a home 5 miles away may earn.
3. **Capacity** – How many people can your property comfortably accommodate? Vacation rentals make trips to the big game possible for groups of friends and family.

### *Investment Properties*

**Income:** \$1,500 - \$2,000 per game

**Rentals:** Can reliably expect 3-4, upwards of 7-8 for most successful properties

**Expenses:** Unlike with some long term leases, owner must pay utilities, cleaning service, etc.

**Other considerations:** Can earn secondary income from other event rentals such as weddings, graduations, etc.

### *Owner Occupied homes*

**Income:** \$1,500 - \$2,000 per game

**Rentals:** Can reliably expect 3-4, upwards of 7-8 for most successful properties

**Expenses:** Must find alternate lodging while guests have checked-in. May prefer to hire cleaning service.



# *Sports Rentals*

## Tax Considerations



“Nothing is certain in life but death and taxes.” Rental real estate is no different. In addition to the complicated income considerations, there are also complex tax issues involved with renting out your home for weekends or long term rentals. We’ve tried to highlight a few common issues below, but we urge you to consult with your tax advisor on any tax issues involved with renting out your home.

-- **Lodging Tax:** In some states, there is a tax on every person engaged in the business of renting or furnishing, for periods of less than thirty (30) days, any room or rooms, lodgings, or accommodations in any commercial hotel, motel, inn, tourist camp, or tourist cabin. It is our belief that this tax does not apply to any of our clients, but to be safe, you should make sure to check with your tax and legal advisor to confirm. Your state’s laws may vary in language and applicability.

--**Federal Income Tax:** The US Tax Code generally provides that income received for rental of a home for no more than 14 days in a calendar year is **exempt from federal income taxes**. As well, if you operate your property as a rental property, you may be entitled to several deductions that an owner-occupier may not be entitled to. Again, we suggest that you check with your tax advisor to minimize the tax liability from any rental income.

Disclaimer: Nothing in this presentation should be construed as tax advice and we urge you to consult with your tax advisor on any tax issues involved with your rental property. Should you become a client of GamedayHousing.com, we can offer the services of our in-house CPA at no additional cost.



# *Sports Rentals*

## *Preparing your property*



*Preparing your home is simple if you put yourself in your guest's shoes*

Guests expect a clean and vibrant property that feels like a hotel but offers amenities that a hotel can't match. Further, a guest is unfamiliar with your home so they need guidance with basic home how-to's such as setting your air conditioner, using your TV, starting your grill, etc. Thoughtful home preparation includes the following:

- Detailed and thorough cleaning beforehand
- For owner occupied homes, personal effects should be removed and secured to build that hotel-like environment and protect your belongings.
- Arrange key pick up (will you leave a lockbox, mail the keys, etc.)
- Set up supplies with extras (toilet paper, towels, soap, linens, how much do you buy?)
- Furnish the home – do you buy extras such as bunk beds or air mattresses to add capacity?
- Prepare welcome letter and guide to home
- Do you offer a welcome gift?
- Photos of the home



# ***Sports Rentals***

## ***Property Management***



*Property Management can be segmented into three functions for sports rentals*

- 1. *Securing bookings*** – We discuss positioning and advertising your home in more detail on the next page, but rental income is maximized when an effective marketing campaign is run year round.
- 2. *Collecting Rents, Contracts, and Security Deposits*** – Payments can be accepted via check, cash, and credit card. Check is easiest but causes long delays in the booking process. Credit card is fastest but carries with it transaction costs and is difficult to setup.
- 3. *Maintenance*** – Cleanings are an example of maintenance that must occur after every rental. Other service may be required such as an urgent response due to a broken appliance or failed heating / cooling system. Remember, a vacation rental is not a hotel, and a guest can not be moved to another room if your home unexpectedly becomes unavailable.

# *Sports Rentals*

## Positioning & Advertising



***Settings rates for your home and then properly advertising the property are the keys to success***

**Rates** We discuss rate setting on our blog and more details can be found at [GamedayHousing.com](http://GamedayHousing.com). The best way to get started is to find another vacation home that is comparable to your own and set your rates similarly. Clearly if your home is closer you want to adjust rates higher, and if your home is nicer you will also enjoy greater rates. If there are no or few homes in your market yet, then we would be happy to give you free advice on how to set your rates – just call us at 1-(888)-7GAMEDAY and we'll walk you through the process.

### **Advertising Sources:**

- **Craigslist** – Craigslist.com is a free resource that supports text ads and some html code for web savvy property owners. Because it is free, craigslist gets very cluttered with basic ads. It is also plagued by spam and scam artists, so renters are less likely to pay top price for homes that are advertised solely on craigslist. We design and manage craigslist ads for our clients and make sure they are reposted four times per week during peak renting season. Those going it alone can professionalize their ads by downloading templates from [postlets.com](http://postlets.com) and visiting our blog for craigslist pointers. They should also pair any ad on craigslist with their own custom website.
- **Search Engine Optimization (SEO)** – Unless you own more than one property it will be difficult to end up at the top of the page for search results. For owners of multiple properties who are going it alone, however, they should definitely take the time to learn more about SEO. [www.pepperjam.com](http://www.pepperjam.com) is a resource we often turn to for SEO advice.
- **Search Engine Marketing (SEM)** – If you can't rank high in SEO you can pay google or yahoo in a pay-per-click (PPC) campaign to make up for the difference. To get started just visit [www.google.com/adwords](http://www.google.com/adwords). Campaigns are hard to setup and rates difficult to adjust, but once up and running PPC is a good way to get your property noticed in search engines.

# *Sports Rentals*

## *Positioning & Advertising (cont'd)*



*For those who want to go above and beyond (like us!) here are some other resources to look into*

- **Banner Ads** – Property Owners can pay for banner ads on a website that covers or supports their local team. Examples of websites that may accept banner advertisements include [www.rivals.com](http://www.rivals.com) and [www.scout.com](http://www.scout.com). These ads often cost hundreds of dollars so they may not be worth the expense for most property owners.
- **Online Sports Forums** – Sporting events are so popular that thousands of fans ‘meet’ online to discuss their favorite teams daily. Examples of such websites again include [www.rivals.com](http://www.rivals.com) and [www.scout.com](http://www.scout.com). With a paid subscription (\$9.99 monthly) to these websites you may be able to get permission to post in the classifieds section of these websites. Unfortunately, more and more websites are requiring that property owners pay for advertising if they use the classifieds so this opportunity is slowly withering.
- **Alumni Outreach** – For college sports, many large Alumni Clubs (NYC, Chicago, LA, etc.) may be willing to include a blurb about your property in a newsletter. With demand for such blurbs rising, many clubs are now charging for this service.

# Sports Rentals

## Payments, Contracts, & more



- ❑ **Contracts:** A requirement for any rental is a rock solid legal contract to protect you, the owner. Do you have an attorney? Attorney's will generally charge \$300-500 to draft a good lease agreement. You can download one online, but without an attorney to review, you may not be protected. **At GamedayHousing.com we manage all contracts for our clients.**
- ❑ **Forms of Payment:** As previously stated, there are many options for payments. The more options you can accept the more likely you will be to increase rental revenue. Make sure to display your payment policy prominently. Setting up credit card access can be done via paypal.com, and if you have a business banking account your banker may be able to setup a credit card processing account for you as well. **We take all forms of payment at no extra charge to clients.**
- ❑ **Payment Timing:** In addition to forms of payment you must set a very cohesive and simple to understand timing policy. Clearly you would like to receive rents up front and in full, whereas your clients would like to pay once they arrive. Sometimes you must meet in the middle. **At GamedayHousing.com we require all rents up front and on a case by case basis will allow clients to pay half up front half 3 months out from an event. We never delay payment in full any further than three months out.**
- ❑ **Service:** The key to maximizing bookings is responsiveness to inquiries. We have found that unless we respond to an inquiry within four hours, a potential guest moves on to another property. If you are operating your own business you must ask yourself what you can do to minimize the time between an inquiry and your answer. Further, you should consider setting up a custom email address and 800 number to instill confidence in your service. Finally, you must ensure you are available to answer inquiries during working hours. **GamedayHousing.com reservation representatives are available to answer inquiries on behalf of our clients daily and our website allows for one click booking – we don't miss opportunity.**
- ❑ **Security Deposits:** *You absolutely must collect and retain a security deposit either via check or a hold on a credit card.* How will you handle security deposit disputes? Will you hold a credit card authorization? If you don't have CC access, will you have the guests send you a check? If so, you'll spend more time after each rental just sending back the check. What happens when a renter disputes your damage assertion? How will you handle it, while still keeping a satisfied customer? The best way to handle these situations is to have a fair and thorough process that you use with each rental, please see GamedayHousing.com for more information about creating your own process.

# Sports Rentals

The GamedayHousing.com solution



*At GamedayHousing.com we offer a turnkey solution, promoting your home, managing your contracts and payments, collecting security deposits, and providing your guests with world-class reservation support – all for a set commission and a \$99 fee that is fully refunded upon your first booking.*

## Simplicity

1. Create and manage your listing in fewer than 60 seconds
2. One click booking process for guests ***with no hidden fees or extra costs regardless of payment type***
3. All contracts and security deposits processed by the GamedayHousing client support team
4. Our sports focus makes it easier for guests to find your home and results in more rental income for you.
5. ***Our commission structure aligns our incentives. We are successfully only when you are.***

## Service

1. Getting started, we'll help you describe your home, select photos, set your rates, and more – ***we want you to succeed***
2. Our team is available around the clock to help when needs arise (***Devoted toll free client support, email responses in less than one hour during business hours.***)
3. Comprehensive advertising of your home at no extra charge (***Craigslist, Banner Ads, SEO, Google Ads, Chat boards, Alumni Groups, Facebook, and more***)
4. Reservation support for guests to make sure that an unanswered question doesn't result in a lost booking
5. ***Fastest response times for booking inquiries in the industry (please test us!)***

# ***Sports Rentals***

## ***Client Testimonials***



*"I have worked with GamedayHousing.com now for two seasons and they have been terrific. Always professional and responsive, they have done an excellent job of marketing our home for Notre Dame events. We are 'sold out' for the upcoming Notre Dame Football Season (2009) and we could not be more satisfied with the group at GamedayHousing.com."*

**Marc, South Bend, Indiana**

*"We listed our rental property with GamedayHousing.com this past winter, fully expecting that we would need to have realistic expectations for a low booking percentage for this upcoming event season. GamedayHousing's sophisticated website and aggressive marketing strategy, however, started us out with no less than 6 event rentals for the year - and this is before the ND football ticket lottery had even started! Furthermore, we are very impressed with their rapid responses to any questions we have had, and the overall communicative nature of their business practices. We are thrilled with our decision to change to their management services, and would recommend them highly to those looking to maximize their income from the event rental market."*

**Marci, South Bend, Indiana**

# *Questions?*

## We're here to help



Thanks for taking the time to read this guide. You've made it through a marathon of slides and if you're still hungry for more please visit us at [blog.gamedayhousing.com](http://blog.gamedayhousing.com).

If you have other questions please feel free to contact us at 1-(888)-7GAMEDAY or [customerservice@gamedayhousing.com](mailto:customerservice@gamedayhousing.com).

Thanks again and please be in touch,

Chris & Geoff



# *Thank you*

## Contacts and Rights



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