

The Manask Report

Food Service News & Views For Museums, Aquariums, Botanic Gardens & Zoos

Volume 6

Spring 2004

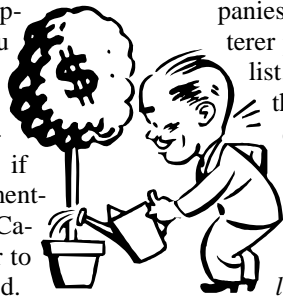
Cultural Institutions Discover \$10,000-\$200,000 In Added Facility Rental Income

Even the most prestigious institutions are discovering considerable untapped net income from renting their facilities to outside groups. Yes, just about everybody rents out facilities, in almost every case providing food and beverage catering. But many if not most institutions are seeing but a fraction of the potential income.

Catering is normally handled one of several ways:

- 1) An exclusive caterer that provides all food and beverage services, or,
- 2) In most cases a list of preferred or approved caterers, and,
- 3) In some instances, an 'open policy' whereby most any caterer that meets certain minimum institution criteria (certificate of insurance, pay a fee, etc.) can provide the service.

If your institution is like most with a 'list of preferred or approved caterers' you will find the following two case studies informative and potentially 'profitable' if you consider implementing an 'Approved Caterer Program' similar to what is being described.



Case Study #1: Improved RFP Process Grows Net Income 250% in 5-Years

This museum has an active facility rental program (a very popular venue in their city for outside groups and organizations to stage events). In 1997 this museum did two things:

- 1) A comprehensive evaluation of its special event department; how it operated; how it interfaced and served museum departments and external customers, quality of management and staff, and,
- 2) Reviewed its preferred caterer program.

The museum's goal was very simple, 'optimize earned income'.

The results of this 1997 special event department study can be reviewed in 'The Complete Guide to Foodservice in Cultural Institutions', Chapter 7 on page 127.

The museum had 16 catering companies on its preferred list. Each caterer paid a \$600 flat fee to be on the list. One of the recommendations that came from the special event department study mentioned above was to consider shortening the list of caterers. The rationale behind this recommendation is: *the shorter the list the greater potential income*

(Continued on page 4)

AN ARCHITECT'S VIEW

'The Manask Report' invites guest column articles from architects that service Museums, Zoos, Aquariums, Botanical Gardens & Historic Homes.

Success in Food Service Begins With Planning, Not Cooking

By: David B. Greenbaum, AIA

It is extremely important to involve a food service planning team early in the design process. I am an architect who has worked closely with many prestigious cultural institutions, and I have learned how critical such early involvement is to the success in food service and food service planning. That measure of success is food service that enhances the public's visit and food service that delivers revenue to the institution.



A Complete Visitor Experience

All aspects of revenue generation should express the character of an institution. Of course, an institution's purpose is not to simply provide revenue, but to extend the experience, help make a memorable impression, and perhaps offer the visitor something to take home. Sensitive food service planning contributes to this by offering a place for reflection, absorption, and relaxation. Changing environments and varying light levels also combat "museum fatigue" and enhance the visitor experience.

Thoughtful selection of an appropriate
(Continued on page 2)

What's Inside...

Operator Update	2
Destination Restaurants: To Be or Not To Be? That Is The Question.	3
Museum Restaurants Exhibit First Class Cuisine in the Nation's Capital	4
News Briefs	5
Museum of Science-Boston: Versatile Café & Catering Services	9

An Architect's View: Success in Food Service Begins With Planning Not Cooking

(Continued from page 1)

ate food menu further defines an institution's character. Not only is it important to develop a menu that is of interest to the audience, it is also vital to reinforce an institution's mission through an elegant presentation. The available menu and type of service has an enormous impact on planning requirements as it guides the type of kitchen and support one needs. Be it a café, food court, cart, or fine dining.

For food service you must ask,
 "What is appropriate to your location and visitation?"
 "Who is your competition?"
 "Are the facilities sized correctly to provide optimum revenue?"...

Examine the Synergies of Revenue Generation

The real estate adage of "location, location, location" applies to revenue generation as well. To maximize revenue retail, facilities must be conspicuous to visitors. Co-locating them in "free-zones" allows for extended hours of operation and offer visitors the chance to browse through a shop after dining, before a lecture, or following a movie. Facilities can be designed in a

way that does not compromise the importance of the interpretive message and a visitor's first impression of an institution.

For larger institutions, multiple clusters of food and retail offerings not only offer choices to the visitor, but also may help capitalize on temporary exhibits or unique places within a building.

Special events, such as banquets and lectures, offer great potential for income to an institution and expose attendees to a facility they might not ordinarily visit. Making the special events area simple to operate will make it easier to market and improve the likelihood that a facility will be rented on a more frequent basis.

For food service you must ask, "What is appropriate to your location and visitation?" "Who is your competition?" "Are the facilities sized correctly to provide optimum revenue?" "What does my audience expect and what is the take-away message?"

Operations

In the early stages of pre-design, I explore "anecdotal paths." That is, I attempt to put myself in the shoes of food service staff, vendors, the public and others that will use a facility. It is also important to determine primary staff and vendor functions, such as the handling of incoming food products, garbage collection, and cash management. Limiting the access of food service staff, caterers, and vendors to public venues is preferred in order to prevent theft and damage to exhibits. Some other questions that should be addressed include: "What will be the added cost of security guards if physical barriers are not provided?" "Does the staff require changing areas, lockers, and separate restrooms?" "How many staff will be required to support food service?"

In the early phases of design, it is important to determine what type and size of utilities and engineering support will be required such as water, power, gas and kitchen exhaust and make-up air. Many of these services

(Continued on page 7)

OPERATOR UPDATE

The **Appleton Museum** hired **Carmichael's Restaurant** to operate foodservice at the museum. James Rosengren, the museum's interim director, said the café would be managed by Beth Shay, a culinary-arts student at Central Florida Community College. Rosengren explained that Shay would be interning under a new program between the museum and the college based on a *News Digest* article in *Nation's Restaurant News* in May 2003.

The **Baltimore Zoo** selected **Aramark** to operate its food stands and portable carts as did the **Hogle Zoo** who selected **Aramark** to operate food, catering and retail services.

Atlanta's **Woodruff Arts Center** selected **Restaurant Associates** to become foodservice provider beginning in the fall of 2005. The

Center is one of the nation's leading centers for performing and visual arts and home to several institutions, including Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

The **Louisville Zoo** selected **Sodexo** to operate its foodservices.

The **Clay Center for the Arts & Sciences** in Charleston, West Virginia signed on **CulinArt**, a New York based foodservice firm.

Wolfgang Puck Catering and Events headquartered in Los Angeles was awarded the visitor foodservice and catering at the **Saint Louis Art Museum** and the **Museum of Contemporary Art** in St. Louis.

The **Asian Art Museum** in San Francisco moved from its former location in Golden Gate Park and opened in 2003 in downtown San Francisco and its café is being operated by **McCall & Associates**; a San Francisco

headquartered catering company.

The **Philadelphia Zoo** selected **CulinArt**, based in New York, to operate its foodservice concessions and **Event Network** to operate its retail concessions.

Orlando Science Center selected **Aramark** to operate its café, catering and retail services in 2003. **Aramark** was also awarded the contracts at the **Oregon Zoo** and **Franklin Institute Science Center** in Philadelphia.

Restaurant Associates was awarded the contracts at the **American Indian Museum** in Washington DC (slated to open in September 2004), **The Woodruff Art Center** and **High Museum** in Atlanta and **The Mark Twain House & Museum** in Hartford, CT.

(Continued on page 9)

Destination Restaurants: To Be or Not To Be? That Is The Question

Something exciting has been happening at cultural institutions around the country: Destination Restaurants are replacing or augmenting the traditional, unexciting food offerings.

A destination restaurant is one with an attractive identity of its own – separate from the identity of the parent institution. It is a restaurant that draws people for the dining experience, often as part of a visit to the institution, but sometimes just for the dining.

Should your institution house a destination restaurant? There could be considerable positive benefits. Or will this be a lot of trouble and cost, with too little positive values?

In recent years, many have discovered that the benefits make it worthwhile to house such a restaurant. Examples include *The Restaurant at The Getty* at LA's Getty Center, *D'Amico & Sons* at The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, *Puck's* (Wolfgang Puck) at the Saint Louis Museum of Art and Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, *Patina* at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles and *Palette* at the Denver Museum among others.

BENEFITS

For your institution, you need to decide if the benefits represent the best use of space. A destination restaurant can do all these things...

- **Contribute substantial net income to your institution. This could be a very meaningful sum.**



- Enhance your reputation, or at least reinforce it.

- Provides a site within your property to host VIP guests in support of development.

- Attract more people, many of them from the "moneyed" community and many of them introduced to you for the first time.

- Generate publicity, giving you more press notice.
- Initially, communicate a sense of new energy and activity.
- Improve the experience of visiting you, and make it easier to spend more time with you. (*After all, now people don't have to leave the premises for a pleasant dining experience.*)
- Importantly – make money!

Downsides



- Substantial investment in dollars and floor space.

- Risk of failure. Rare, if planned right. (And often an operator's 2nd concept benefits from the learning experience, and is successful.)

- Dealing with artistic restaurateurs. ("Artistic" people -- something with which you are familiar.)

DETERMINING WHAT IS RIGHT FOR YOU

For major institutions: The ideal is to attract a known restaurant brand. Such as a Patina in Los Angeles, or Paul Bucle in New Orleans, or Charley Trotter in Chicago. Such famed restaurant operators will attract the most people from Day 1, and enhance your image the most. But it takes a major institution to attract a major brand. Also, this requires more space commitment, usually more investment. So the major restaurant name brings more financial upside and more financial risk.

Keep in mind you can be a new addition to a single restaurant in your community, or an additional unit in a chain, so long as the quality level is appropriate for your institution.

For medium-size institutions and communities: You don't have to be in one of the nation's top restaurant cities to have an attractive destination

restaurant. Most communities have well regarded local or regional destination restaurants. You might offer them an attractive expansion opportunity. Or, you could take the approach discussed below.

For smaller institutions or in smaller communities: Too small or too risk adverse to deal with a 'brand' restaurant operator? You can have an attractive concept developed specifically for you, then build your own brand either in your name or one you create. To operate it, follow the normal operator selection (RFP) procedures. This approach can provide the benefits discussed above.

NEXT STEPS

(1) Discuss your unique situation with a resource that understands food service in cultural institutions. One on your team, that can help you look at all the options, objectively.

(2) Discuss your situation with peers in other institutions that have or have had destination restaurants. What works, what does not work and what did they learn as they went through the process?

(3) Draw up a plan that addresses the issues you will face such as fiscal matters, your image, location of restaurant in your existing building or expansion and the effect on your facilities. You will need professional help here.

(4) Contact the potential operator (s) to determine interest.



What a wonderful addition to your facility this can be!

About the Author

Ray Coen is a well-known, successful food service consultant. He works with clients across the country in concept development, business strategies, and marketing. His clients range from large national chains to local independents, at all levels of food service; plus museums and zoos, often in association with Manask & Associates. ■

www.raycoen.com.

Museum Restaurants Exhibit First Class Cuisine In The Nation's Capital

There's always a season for tourists in the Nation's Capital, and tour guides, locals, and families in search of convenience, affordability and actual *taste* are flocking to Washington's in-museum restaurants. Dining at a museum no longer carries the 'triangle sandwich,' snack-bar stigma one might assume. Modern foodservice operators now derive flavorful menu items from popular exhibits, provide a wide range of healthy and fresh culinary fare, and create atmospheres that, while opulent, do not cost as much as a nearby upscale restaurant.

"Our dining facilities engage museum visitors with an imaginative taste of convenience and history," said

Ron Hallagan, Vice President at Guest Services, Inc. "Yielding a wide variety of first-rate cuisine, our museum restaurants offer intimacy to local passers-by and refined affordability to larger groups and families." The ultimate goal, said Hallagan, is to keep visitors in the museum for the entire experience.

Small museums and galleries allow for enhanced creativity on the menu. A hidden treasure among Washington's tourist set, **The Hillwood Museum & Gardens** features the most comprehensive collection of 18th- and 19th-century Russian and French art and décor, among 25 acres of exotic gardens. Emulating the rich European décor, the **Hillwood Museum Café**, operated

by Guest Services, offers breakfast, lunch and Washington's most sought after traditional English tea, including scones, pastries and Devonshire cream. The **Hillwood Museum Café's** menu reflects Russian and French tastes, offering Potage St. Germain (Split Pea Soup with Ham), Pierogies, and L a c h m a n j u n (Armenian Pizza on Herbed Dough). A children's menu caters to parents with Cheese Pizza Points and Peanut Butter & Jelly Uncrustables.

The **Fossil Café**, operated by Restaurant Associates at the **Museum of Natural History**, which can seat

(Continued on page 8)



Cultural Institutions Discover \$10,000-\$200,000 in Added Facility Rental Income

(Continued from page 1)

to the museum. This *short list* approach had not been tried by other similar institutions in this city and there was concern that a short list might reduce net income because fewer caterers could bring business (clients) to the museum. Museum management believed in the *short list* concept and conducted a Request for Proposal (RFP) process with the goal to shrink the caterer list from 16 to 5. As part of the RFP process each caterer was required to:

- 1) Pay a percentage of total caterer food revenue (the museum handles the alcoholic beverage sales),
- 2) Guarantee the museum a minimum dollar annual payment (the greater of the minimum payment or the percentage),
- 3) Pay a percentage of total caterer food revenue towards an advertising and marketing fund that is pooled, administered and controlled by the museum and spent in consultation with all the approved caterers,
- 4) Provide a discount on museum sponsored/paid for catering,

- 5) Provide an annual catering donation, and,
- 6) Host (at caterer cost) an annual PR event (public relations party) where the museum donates the space and the caterer's prospective clients, meeting planners, etc. are invited.

The result of this RFP process enabled the museum to select a total of 8 caterers, caterers that represented a true cross-section of menu variety, pricing/cost, quality, and other factors to be reasonably certain that any internal (museum department) or external client could find a caterer in their list that met the client's service needs and budget.

This museum was so pleased with the results of this RFP process, after a 3-year period they did another RFP with the goal to further reduce the list of caterers from 8 to a maximum of 5-6. It is interesting to note that when this museum conducted its first RFP there were about 15 proposals received from local caterers. When this RFP was done in 2003 there were more than 20 proposals received.

Why did this museum's net income grow with this 'Approved Caterer Program'? Following are some of the key reasons:

- ✓ As part of the RFP selection process the museum looked carefully at which caterers actually brought clients to the museum versus those that were just names on the list.
- ✓ A review of historical catering activity at the Museum indicated that 5-6 caterers catered 80%+ of the events in any event (this is true with most cultural institutions).
- ✓ The caterers offered a minimum annual dollar commission which meant they had to be motivated to bring business to the museum, not just wait for calls from museum referrals.
- ✓ By concentrating 100% of the catering revenues with fewer caterers, this makes it more profitable for this short-list, thus enabling the museum to receive more net dollars in return.

(Continued on page 7)

NEWS BRIEFS

Dallas Zoo gets first indoor eatery. Visitors to the Dallas Zoo after more than a century of eating at outdoor snack carts are enjoying a new, indoor food court known as The Prime Meridian. The 12,000 square-foot restaurant contains 500 seats, 350 indoors and another 150 at an outdoor deck overlooking a man-made pond. The \$4.1 million project, which also included improvements to the adjacent flamingo holding area, was completed with the help of bonds owned by the city. The Prime Meridian, operated by Dallas based *Culinaire International*, takes its name from the longitudinal line running from north to south form which all the world's time zones are measured. Among the six food stations are the Rio Grande Burrito Stand, Noble Roman's Pizza, Hop Along Snacks, Gorilla Grill, Love Me Tender and Penguin Parlor. (Nation's Restaurant News, 12/1/03)



Phoenix Art Museum Success Story. In the 2003 *The Manask Report* there was a featured article titled 'Do It Yourself Operator Selection'. Here is an update from PAM deputy director Woody Spivey in a memorandum to his Foodservice Advisory Committee dated 9/10/03: "You all remember *Arcadia Farms*, don't you? The company that you helped select to run the Art Museum Café? Well this is a little update. *Arcadia Farms* began operating our café in mid-October 2002. From October 2002 through July 2003, café sales were \$419,594. During the same 10-month period one year earlier (before *Arcadia Farms* era), sales were \$225,640. Putting it a little differently, *Arcadia Farms* orchestrated an 86% sales increase during its first 10 months of operation. Museum attendance, during the same time periods had a decline of 6%. Rather impressive. What's more, *Arcadia Farms* has been extremely helpful and cooperative. We have also received many praises about

their food and service. Thanks again to all of you for participating in the selection process and for helping to make such a great selection." [Editor's Note: See page 5 article in the 2003 *The Manask Report* to learn how Woody Spivey orchestrated this fabulous success story. It can be downloaded and printed at www.manask.com publications section.]

Party arty all night: The lines stretched a quarter-mile and into the wee hours as free LACMA (Los Angeles County Museum of Art) bash mixed music and old masters. "Between 9 p.m. Thursday and 7 a.m. Friday, more than 8,000 Los Angeles scenesters braved multi-hour waits and quarter mile lines to attend Cabaret LACMA, a free, all-night public bash at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art according to an article in the *Los Angeles Times*. The museum combined free admission to the popular art shows with live classical and electronic music, food and drinks, prizes including luxury travel and hotel accommodations, video presentations, a live graffiti artist and a sneak preview of the upcoming feature film "Modigliania," starring Andy Garcia.



Exhibiting Good Taste. Eve Zibart had a very large article in the *Washington Post* on June 13, 2003 talking about museum foodservice in the Mall (in Washington D.C.). Her excellent write-up included a detailed review of each museum's foodservices, days and hours of operation and price ranges. There is a map of the Mall by Laura Stanton that shows the museum locations and great food graphics. The article highlighted 'Best for Groups of Kids', 'Best for Adults', 'Best for Teens and Young Adults', 'Best for All-Ages Groups', 'Quietest' and 'Most Romantic'.

The **Museum of Fine Arts** in Boston, where director Malcolm Rogers called members "our closest family", is looking at new ways to "add value to membership" like increasing restaurant dis-

counts. **The Art Institute** of Chicago which has the largest museum membership in the United States, according to its spokeswoman, Eileen Harakal will soon be installing bar-coded member and donor tracking; she said to tailor appeals to its members and increase revenues. (New York Times, 4/23/03)

Code Orange: Reducing Your Risk of Target Terrorism. The *California Restaurant Association* published tips for protecting your business and customers from terrorism (through your restaurant, café, food/beverage catering and/or concession stands). Is your institution prepared in this regard? CRA members can find details in the 'CRA Confidential Bulletin No. 2/ February-March 2003'.

Just Picked: In the July 2003 issue of *Gourmet* magazine, 'Weekends until October 12, big-name chefs cook up garden-fresh produce amid the greenery for the **Chicago Botanic Garden's** Regenstein Fruit and Vegetable Garden.'

A better Met, you bet: Café at the venerable art museum gets major upgrade. The September 2003 issue of *Food Management* described the dining facilities at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York 'as much a work of art as their surroundings'. 'Gone are the 1940s-era-cafeteria and wait-service restaurant with their cramped, barely accessible kitchen. In their stead stands the new spacious cafeteria and a new restaurant the Petrie Court Café (another restaurant, the American Wing Café is scheduled to open in 2004). The new cafeteria is conveniently located in the center of the building's first floor right next to the main lobby. It seats 440, an increase of about 60 seats over the previous cafeteria and the Petrie Court Café will seat 130, somewhat less than the 175 in the old wait-service restau-

(Continued on page 6)

NEWS BRIEFS

(Continued from page 5)

rant. The old cafeteria space will now become part of a significantly renovated and expanded Greco-Roman exhibit.' *Restaurant Associates* is the foodservice operator.

Cooking with Gas. The **Cleveland Museum of Art** conducted a survey of art museums in 2003 to determine how many have gas versus electric cooking equipment in restaurant/café kitchens. According to CMA's Ian Herron, of 30 surveyed, all but 2 have gas cooking equipment.

Environmental Awareness: What Can Science Centers Do? The November/December 2003 issue of *ASTC Dimensions* features extensive articles about sustainable strategies, a Children's Museum goes green, what's reasonable to expect, changing minds and related articles and features in this regard. Articles by Nancy Stueber and Greg Kamerer of OMSI talk about the **Oregon Museum of Science and Industry** working with its foodservice operator *Aramark* with the goal that the museum could send 10 fewer dump loads of food wastes to the landfill each year if they composted the kitchen scraps from the café. [Editor's Note: More and more Science, Natural History Museum and Botanical Gardens are placing greater and greater emphasis on sustainability and environmental awareness. We recommend reviewing this issue of *ASTC Dimensions* and compliment *ASTC* for providing its members this resource.]

Restaurant Associates transformed Café on 4 at the **American Museum of Natural History** in New York into the Petra Café in honor of the museum's "Petra: Los City of Stone" exhibit. The café will feature a variety of Middle Eastern dishes through July 6, 2004. (*Nation's Restaurant News*, 11/10/03)

The 90% Restaurant First-Year Failure Rate is a Myth. The Editor's Letter by Michael Sanson, Editor-in-Chief of *Restaurant Hospitality* magazine in the November 2003 issue indicated that "According to an Ohio State University study, the 90 percent failure rate is off-base. The rate may actually

be around 57 to 61 percent, says H.G. Parsa, an associate professor of Hospitality Management at the university in Columbus, Ohio." "Parsa's study was based on data he collected from more than 2,439 Columbus, Ohio, area restaurants over a three-year period. He says a review of other published studies on the subject comes to a conclusion similar to his."

Up on the Roof: At Last, a New Look for the Kennedy Center's Top Restaurant. The restaurant

redo was part of a complete overhaul of the food service operations at the 32-year-old performing arts institution—an extensive \$6.4 million job overseen by a committee of board members, Kennedy Center officials and representatives of *Restaurant Associates*, which manages the foodservices at the center according to an extensive article by Judith Weintraub, *Washington Post* Staff Writer on October 8, 2003. According to Claudette Donlon, executive vice president of the center, "The whole issue was that the Kennedy Center was moving up and up and up physically and programmatically, and the food service wasn't keeping up with it. It needed to be the quality everything else was. We felt it was time for a renovation and new look." The architect and designer selected was Thierry Despont

who not only does private homes of the very rich (Bill Gates, Calvin Klein) but also interiors for the J. Paul Getty Center in Los Angeles, the restoration of the Statue of Liberty. The new Roof Top Restaurant features a chic, clean-lined, ocean-liner look with lush tones of caramel, butter-scotch, taupe and sea foam.

Critical Condition: QSRs (quick service restaurants) must clean up their act before 'dirty secret' wounds segment. The December 1, 2003 issue of *Nation's Restaurant News* featured an

NRN Editorial about the NBC "Dateline" news program that featured an exposé that was the result of an investigation that examined health inspection reports for the 10 largest QSR companies over the last 18 months. This is a lengthy article that includes the top-10 list for dirtiest restaurant chain according to the NBC "Dateline" news program. The list, based on the best to the worst, according to NBC "Dateline" is:

- (10) Taco Bell
- (9) McDonald's
- (8) KFC
- (7) Subway
- (6) Jack in the Box
- (5) Dairy Queen
- (4) Hardee's
- (3) Wendy's
- (2) Arby's
- (1) Burger King

According to the *NRN Editorial*, 'Between concern over the country's obesity rates, the ramifications of a still-unfolding hepatitis outbreak and the "Dateline" exposé, the foodservice industry---and especially the fast-food segment---are under increasing scrutiny.'

Museums offer fine dining along with art. Andrew Marton, a writer for *Knight Ridder Newspapers* recently had a great article in the December 12, 2003 issue of the *Press-Telegram* about museum dining. The article starts out; "A family was driving along Interstate 80 between New York and Chicago earlier this year when, on a whim, they abruptly veered off the highway for a two-hour detour. A hundred or so miles later, they walked into the Frick Art and Historical Center on Pittsburgh's east side. They hadn't come for the art. They were there for the food." The article goes on and talks about the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, the Missouri Historical Society, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Na-

(Continued on page 10)

Cultural Institutions Discover \$10,000-\$200,000 in Added Facility Rental Income

(Continued from page 4)

- ✓ Having motivated caterers with excellent sales organizations increases the institution's 'facility rental income' as well as catering commissions.
- ✓ RFP competition provided the museum discounts on internal catering and outright donations that were not received before.
- ✓ The caterers are contributing to a marketing/advertising fund; dollars the museum did not have in its budget before this program was put in place.



12 to 4 firms. *Why only four?* Case Study #1 demonstrated that a short-list can produce more net income and this institution felt that four caterers could provide the quality, variety, pricing and menus to meet all user needs in their geographic area.

Following the same procedure in Case Study #1, this institution issued an RFP to about 15 local caterers. It is important to point out that many of the caterers in the community complained, said it was not going to work, it was not fair and created some negative PR for the institution (this also happened to the museum in Case Study #1 when the first RFP was done).

Caterers that have not been sharing profits with the institution in the past were less than enthusiastic about responding to the RFP. When the RFP was issued, however, as was experienced in Case Study #1, there was close to a 100% enthusiastic response to the RFP and the complaints went away. Fifteen proposals were received and four caterers selected. The four finalists are guaranteeing this institution over \$200,000 in first year net *new* income. This does not include discounts and other financial advantages and incentives.

What are the key caterer criteria to

be on this short-list?

- ✗ Food and service quality;
- ✗ The caterer understanding they are *a guest in your home*;
- ✗ Ability to be creative and flexible in the delivery of food to guests due to most institution's physical limitations of space for kitchens and service staff;
- ✗ Reputation and relevant experience at other cultural institutions including experience working at this institution;
- ✗ Realize your institution is first '*a Museum*' (or zoo, botanic garden, or historic home) dedicated to preserve its collection and service its visitors and the community...*not just a special event venue*;
- ✗ Ability to provide catering services with a variety of menus at different price points and to a variety of different internal and external customers;
- ✗ Ability to bring *new* customers (which are potential members, donors and sponsors);
- ✗ Demonstrated sales and marketing capabilities;
- ✗ Financial returns;
- ✗ Financial strength and stability; and,
- ✗ Related criteria as determined by the Museum during the evaluation and selection process. ■

Case Study #2: Revising the Preferred Catering List Adds \$220,000 Net Income in Year One

Another institution that is a popular seasonal destination for visitors and facility rentals was looking for new ways to increase earned income. This institution has a long history of renting its facilities to outside groups and organizations and allowing the user to pick from about 12 caterers on the preferred list.

Seeing the demonstrated success as detailed under Case Study #1, above, the president of this institution decided to conduct a similar RFP process with the goal to reduce the caterer list from

An Architect's View: Success in Food Service Begins With Planning Not Cooking

(Continued from page 2)

should be crafted based on the anticipated menu and style of food service that is to be served.

Other considerations are determining the hours of operation. Will food service be available before and after museum opening? Who will operate your facility - In-house or contracted? If contracted, what impact will this vendor have on the museum? Bringing this vendor on too late in the design process will most likely ensure last minute changes.

Other questions to consider include: Will special events always be catered or will your food service operations provide the food? Who can you trust to

take good care of and adequately clean up and leave no traces or damage to finishes? It is obviously important to provide restrooms, a catering pantry, public and loading access adjacent to the event area. Considerations also need to be given to permit pre-event set without disturbing daytime operations. What other support spaces will the caterer require to provide efficient service? (For example, loading and staging and food preparation).

Programming and Planning

Advance planning of food services can yield long-term benefits for an institution. Engaging foodservice planners in the earliest stage of schematic

design and pre-design helps a facility maximize revenue and minimize costs adding to the visitor experience.

About the Author



David Greenbaum, AIA, is the leader of SmithGroup's Learning and Discovery Studio, a group of architects, engineers and planners focused on projects with cultural and higher education cores. Representative museum projects with food service planning experience has included the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History, National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden Pavilion, Corcoran Gallery of Art, International Spy Museum, and the Mystic Seaport. ■

www.smithgroup.com

Museum Restaurants Exhibit First Class in the Nation's Capital

(Continued from page 4)

up to 50 guests, integrates real fossils with descriptive text and illustrations into the restaurant's table tops. With price points from \$3.50 to \$8, **Fossil Café** is affordable and educational, whetting visitors' palettes with salads, sandwiches and desserts and whetting their curiosity for more museum exploration.

As Washington's museum restaurants cater to a medium scale – less intimate and allowing for more groups, their creativity and taste remain surprisingly intact. **The Pavilion Café**, operated by Guest Services, Inc. at the **National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden** is a pristine in-house eatery, attracting locals, social groups and tourists alike to enjoy sandwich and tapas fare, seasonal “Jazz in the Garden” and “Jazz on Ice” evening concerts and one of Washington's only ice-skating rinks. The Pavilion Café menu ranges from \$2.50 to \$7.75, and offers group box lunches. Keeping cost low, quality high and offering an extraordinary view of the gardens and ice-rink, the picturesque Pavilion Café attracted more than 250,000 visitors in 2003.

Off the beaten path from the National Mall, the modern and much acclaimed

Corcoran Gallery of Art's restaurant, **Café des Artistes**, has been praised by *Washingtonian Magazine* as a shining star among sightseeing eateries, seating a crowd of 100 to 150. Set among the Corcoran's elegant atrium, the Café offers unique promotions drawing inspiration from the museum's exhibitions. During the recent *Jacqueline Kennedy: The White House Years Exhibition*, the foodservice operator, Guest Services, created recipes inspired by Marta Sgubin, Mrs. Kennedy's nanny and chef. The Café also features a year-round “Little Painter's Menu” for younger visitors. **The Café des Artistes' Sunday Gospel Brunch** is a longstanding tradition, offering a Southern-inspired buffet menu and live music from celebrated regional gospel choirs. Encouraging the entire gallery experience, the Sunday Gospel Brunch is \$23.95 and includes admission to the museum exhibits.

To satisfy the largest tourist crowds in Washington, larger museum restaurants have partnered with national fast food brands. **The National Air & Space Museum (NASM)**, which receives more visitors than any other Washington venue (10 million

annually), recently renovated **Wright Place**, ideal for en masse groups of children to be fed quickly, affordably and efficiently. Boston Market, Donato's Pizza and McDonalds' franchised meals lessen the elegance of the hangar-like eatery, but maintain tourists' wants and provide name recognition. NASM offers a menu of paninis, salads, beer and wine at the smaller Mezza Café and the Flight Fare Café. Although reasonably priced from \$3 to \$7, these cafes are far less popular than Wright Place, which seats 1,000.

No matter the size, Washington's museum restaurants are a tasteful, convenient and affordable alternative to stand-alone local eateries. Creating high quality, low cost menus with a historical and cultural edge provides a unique and educational dining experience for refined travelers, tourists, families and locals to relax in and enjoy. ■

By Carrie Foster – Linda Roth Associates, LLC – Linda Roth Associates is a public relations and marketing firm serving the foodservice, hospitality, and travel and tourism industries in Washington, DC and surrounding areas. For more information, contact carrie@lindarothpr.com.

Great Menu Items From Tiny Kitchens?

There are many small museums, botanic gardens and historic homes that have cafés with tiny kitchens who struggle to provide high quality freshly prepared menu items. They do not have the space and/or ability to exhaust conventional ovens and stoves. With no endorsement intended or implied, we have heard of 'TurboChef' (www.turbochef.com), a combination microwave and high speed (air moves at 80 mph) convection oven. We are told that it needs no ventilation and is about the size of a large microwave oven. The oven can broil, bake, brown and fry handling frozen or fresh foods. It can do pizza, salmon filet or a leg of lamb in minutes. ■



CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS

“The Manask Report” is committed to accuracy. To reach us, please feel free to contact us at Phone: (818) 557-0635 or (800) 686-8813; Fax: (818) 563-3552 or Email: ArtManask@manask.com.

CLARIFICATION: In the Spring 2003 edition there was an article about Museum of Science and Industry's new “Brain Food Court Café” in Chicago. Included is a drawing of the ‘Brain Food Court’ that was designed by the Romano Gatland firm.

MAILING LIST: We apologize if in the past you have provided Manask & Associates with your current or updated mailing address and it did not get in our database. Please forward updates and corrections to Catherine Lorrimer at catherine@manask.com or fax to (818) 563-3552. New subscription requests to www.manask.com/html/publications.html.

Museum of Science—Boston: Versatile Café & Catering Services

What you see isn't always what you get. Take the Galaxy Café at Boston's Museum of Science. The foodservice offers Museum visitors a variety of eating options both day and night. Whether it is pizza baked before their eyes, Legal Seafood's chowder, oversized gourmet deli sandwiches, Starbucks' coffee or Friendly's ice cream, the Galaxy Cafes' experience is sure to please.

And who could believe that the Galaxy Cafés could be transformed into an elegant evening function facility? During the week, daytime visitors view the exhibit halls and what they see is just the exhibits. In the minds of the Museum's Group & Function Sales department and Creative Gourmet (a division of Sodexo), the Museum's onsite foodservice operator, they see sales opportunities. The transition is amazing.

Guests graze on food stations with a flair while viewing computer images of fish in the Virtual Fishtank exhibit. The New England Habitat houses many unique exhibits and displays where guests wander through out while enjoying passed hors d'oeuvres and a glass of wine. To the awe and wonder of the guests, their evening is replete with fabulous food and interesting exhibits that truly create a memorable event.



There has been an increased sales effort of coupling themed menus with promotional mailings informing clients of all the Museum has to offer. The upcoming India Omni film will be complemented by a menu complete with an authentic array of Indian delicacies. Adrenalin Rush, an exhibit opening this spring, will be an excellent match for our Coffee Break promotions. Visitors are being enticed to the Museum of Science in Boston to enjoy the many different offerings, to make a daytrip of it or spend

an evening at a remarkable event.

Friday nights the Galaxy Cafés are transformed into the popular Science Street Café, open from 6pm-10pm. The martini bar offers adults another avenue to make an evening of their visit to the Museum while dining on exceptional appetizers and hearing live Jazz music. Or stop by the Sunday brunch in the Skyline Room to enjoy breathtaking views of Boston while tasting all of the goodies on the self serve buffets featuring breakfast favorites as well as a chef's table that changes weekly. Where else can you dine with unbelievable views of the Charles River and then learn about dinosaurs and the Big Dig?

Come see for yourself because seeing is believing. And when you see, you'll be amazed!! ■

Article Submitted By: The Group and Function Sales Department at the Museum of Science, Boston with Sodexo/Creative Gourmet.

OPERATOR UPDATE

(Continued from page 2)

The Mobile Museum of Art, in Alabama selected *Aramark* to operate its food and catering services.

Compass USA has purchased a minority equity interest in Los Angeles based *Wolfgang Puck Catering and Events*. *Compass USA* also owns or has equity ownership in *Bon Appetit Management, Restaurant Associates* and the *Patina Group*, among other US based foodservice firms that provide services to museums, zoos, aquariums and historic homes.

Volume Services has changed its name to *Centerplate*.

Wolfgang Puck Catering and Events partnered with *Aramark* and is the exclusive caterer for external events at **Saint Louis Science Center.** ■



DATES TO REMEMBER!!!

Visit Our Booth and Meet
Manask & Associates Representatives At:



TAM

Waco, TX
March 30-April 1

AAM

New Orleans, LA
May 7-9

AABGA

Dallas, TX
June 10

*** CAM**

Napa Valley, Santa Rosa
July 22

*** MPMA**

Casper, WY
September 8-10

ASTC

San Jose, CA
September 18-19

*** AZA**

New Orleans, LA
September 19-21

WMA

Seattle, WA
October 7-8

*** MAAM**

Philadelphia, PA
October 16-18

*** AMM**

Grand Rapids, MI
October 21-22

*** SEMC**

Winston Salem, NC
October 20-22

*** NEMA**

Burlington, VT
October 27-28

* NOTE: Dates are subject to change. Please feel free to contact us for verification. Thank you!

NEWS BRIEFS

(Continued from page 6)

tional Gallery of Art, the American Museum of Natural History among others. This article is in keeping with most museum director's desire that museum restaurants and cafés are truly part of the museum and the visitor experience. In closing, this article says, "It's no coincidence that one of the selling points of the newly opened Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas is its menu of food catered by the kitchen of the luxurious Mansion on Turtle Creek. The Mansion's beloved tortilla soup has overnight become a mainstay at the Nasher." ■

NOW AVAILABLE

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO **FOODSERVICE IN CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS**

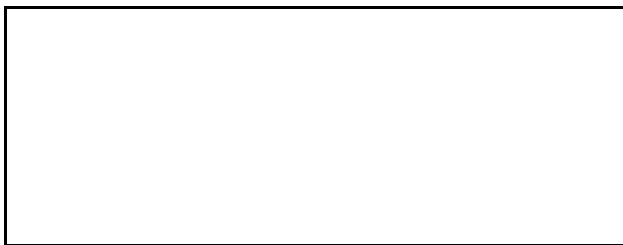
Keys to Success in Restaurants, Catering and Special Events

ARTHUR M. MANASK
WITH MITCHELL SCHECHTER

Ordering Information

WWW.MANASK.COM — "PUBLICATIONS" SECTION

The Nation's Leading Foodservice Consultants MUSEUMS, ZOOS, AQUARIUMS, BOTANIC GARDENS & HISTORIC HOMES



New York Metropolitan Area

Midwest

California

OFFICES IN:

WWW.MANASK.COM

E-Mail: ArtManask@manask.com

Fax: (818) 563-3552

(818) 557-0635 • (800) 686-8813

Burbank, California 91502

Suite 103

209 West Alameda Avenue,

MANASK & ASSOCIATES