

Strengthening the Nantucket Cultural District: Community Outreach and Data Collection



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ABSTRACT

The Nantucket Cultural District (NCD) was officially designated in January 2016 with the goal to centralize, expand, and promote the island's culture. This project's goals were to assist the NCD by developing a community outreach plan and by creating a system to collect and evaluate metrics to measure the impacts of the district. To realize the first goal, we developed a website to centralize social and district media. To achieve our second goal, we utilized Google Forms and Google Sheets to develop a data collection and analysis tool. Finally, we made recommendations to the NCD to expand district membership, broaden web presence, increase metric tracking, and adopt a new sustainable financial model.

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Nantucket Cultural District (NCD) was officially designated in January 2016. The district was formed with the goal to centralize and expand the culture of the island and to advertise to residents and tourists the different aspects of the island culture. However, since the district is so new, many advancement strategies are still in the development stage. Central to these advancement strategies are the development of “linkages”, or strategic marketing partnerships between businesses and cultural organizations within the district. As such, certain metrics need to be developed, collected, and analyzed by the district in order to show the economic and other impacts of linkages as well as the overall success of the district.

Figure 1: Map of the Nantucket Cultural District ➔



Background

A cultural district can be defined as a walkable area comprised of businesses and cultural organizations. The development of cultural districts is often considered when vacant and unused infrastructure leads to low property values, crime, and a lack of a sense of community. Such areas can be repurposed by local government as “fertile grounds for redevelopment” (Cultural Districts, 2012), which can then be expanded upon by the community to include business development zones, artist areas, and cultural districts, among many other redevelopment spaces.

Cultural districts can either form naturally, or a municipality may choose to pursue a specific district type in order to adapt to a city’s needs and goals. Cities that seek the formation of cultural districts understand that community, diversity, and heritage are essential tools for the holistic and long-term development of an area. (Duxbury, et. al. 2016).

Cultural districts have proven to increase out of town tourism, foot traffic, time, and money spent in a particular area. For example, a 2013 analysis of 99 different cultural districts throughout the United States showed that in general, there are notable positive effects of district

formation on property values, employment levels, and income levels both within the districts, as well as areas within close proximity to the district (Noonan 2013).

Cultural districts can also have a major role in organizing both small and large-scale events that involve collaborations between stakeholders in the district. Annual events such as food, art, and film festivals, concert series, and holiday celebrations are all proven to be much more effective at being economically successful when cultural organizations work together, as opposed to operating independently (Thornton, 2012)

While cultural districts are known to have a wide range of advantages, there are additional notable considerations. In particular, when cultural districts are designed to be used as a public policy instrument for local economies or for urban revitalization reasons, there can be negative socioeconomic consequences (Thornton, 2012). These consequences can include gentrification, the “Disneyfication” of an area, and the unfortunate reality that some efforts will not achieve sustained success.

Methodology

Our goal was to assist the Nantucket Cultural District by developing a community outreach plan and creating a system to collect and evaluate metrics to measure the impacts of the district.

Our sponsors suggested we start by communicating with specific stakeholders involved in the cultural district through interviews, focus groups, and surveys. Our first step then was to collect qualitative data from cultural organizations, businesses, and residents by interviewing key stakeholders. The goal of these interviews was to determine key stakeholder knowledge of the cultural district as well as their willingness to cooperate with the NCD.

Our second step was to create an initial list of possible metrics based on our study of other cultural districts. We then created a set of criteria to determine if the proposed metrics would be applicable to the NCD and based our methods for selecting quantitative metrics on the following criteria:

- Non-disclosure of sensitive business data
- Data already collected or easily collected by member organizations
- Metric representative of economic impacts
- Realistic for the NCD to collect from member organization

Results

Interview Findings

Listed below are the most important findings from our interviews. A complete list of findings can be found in our report.

- Many community members do not know about the cultural district or its purpose.

- Community members use social media for obtaining and relaying information about events that occur on the island and in the district.
- Businesses generally only track inventory and sales data, while nonprofit organizations track attendance data.
- Businesses were not likely to share their total gross sales, but they would likely share percentage changes in gross sales if they were asked and the data was kept anonymous.

Website and Social Media Plan

One of the Nantucket Cultural District's primary goals was to increase awareness of the cultural district. We determined that since the Steering Committee had already developed physical media such as maps and brochures, the next logical step was to develop an increased internet presence. At the start of the project, the district's web presence was limited to a single page on the Town of Nantucket Department of Culture and Tourism website. We proposed to the NCD Executive Steering Committee that we expand the current internet presence into a fully-featured, independent website (URL: www.nantucketculturaldistrict.org).

The website went through multiple drafts over the course of its development. This included the use of a focus group with the Steering Committee members providing feedback and discussion, which resulted in a variety of feature changes. While developing the website, we determined that the website should have a dual-role as an educational tool for visitors as well as a platform for businesses and cultural organizations to communicate and collaborate with one another, as well as access the data submittal tool that our team developed.

Creating a Data Collection and Analysis Tool

In order to develop our data collection and analysis tool we created a list of criteria of the necessary features that can be found in our full report. A list of our most important criteria are included below:

- An easy-use tool that required minimal training
- Able to collect and consolidate confidential data from many different sources
- Enable easy analysis of data, including economic changes in correlation with cultural district events
- Track linkages and collaborations between organizations

Based on these criteria, we chose to use Google Forms and Google Sheets for a data collection tool. Google Forms is a software program that allows the user to create a questionnaire that can be sent to multiple people and allows the answers to be automatically archived in Google Sheets. Google Sheets is a software application similar to Microsoft Excel that allows the user to archive and analyze information as well as create graphical representations of data. The data collection process is displayed in Figure 2. The process starts at the website, where cultural organizations and businesses can access the data collection forms. Using the Google Form interface, the data is submitted and automatically uploaded to Google Sheets where it is archived and analyzed.

For businesses, the Google Form is structured to collect percentage change in gross sales from three days, each one exactly a week apart. For example, each participating business would be asked for their percentage change sales data from the Thursday prior to a selected event, the day of the event, and the Thursday after the event. Due to the potential ambiguity of the data we are trying to collect from businesses, we created a Percentage Change Calculator. This is a simple Excel formula sheet which takes in the date of the event, gross sales for three days, and returns a consistent percentage change. This ensures all data submitted using the data collection forms accurately reflects the data we are trying to collect.

For the cultural organization members of the district, the NCD Steering Committee has requested that they submit data to the NCD on attendance numbers so that the NCD could, in turn, aggregate the attendance data and submit it to the Massachusetts Cultural Council as part of their state-required annual report. Prior to our arrival, the cultural organizations did not have a uniform way to submit attendance data. To address this issue, we developed another Google Form for that purpose. The cultural organizations are to select two events to report attendance data, one during the on-season and one during the off-season for data collection, so we incorporated this requirement into the form.

Finally, in addition to the Business Event Data and the Cultural Attendance Data, we also set up a Google Form to collect information regarding linkages (collaborations) between businesses and cultural organizations. This form collects information such as the name of the linkage, the date it occurred, general reception, the weather, and their change in gross sales before and after the event.

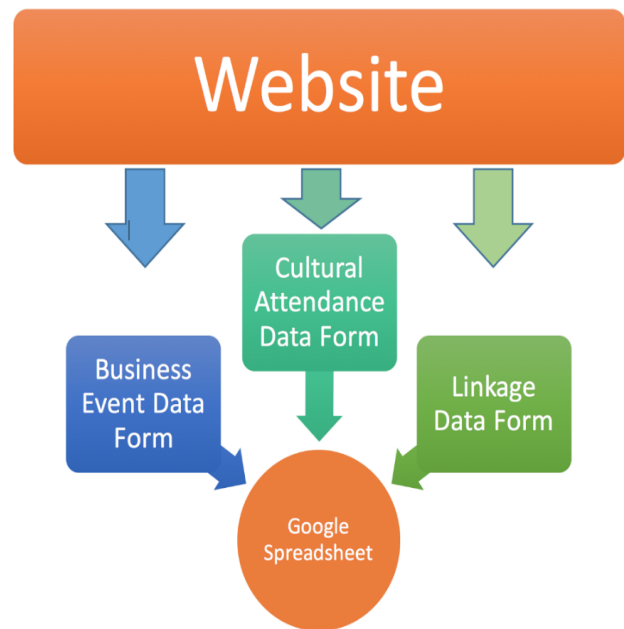


Figure 2: This figure shows how the data collection and archiving process takes place.

Recommendations

Our project resulted in six recommendations we identified as important that the NCD address. They are sorted by importance, starting with what we believe is the most important and immediate recommendation.

- 1. The NCD should improve public knowledge and support of the NCD by inviting new members of the residential, business, and seasonal communities to join the district.*

Working with the NCD Executive Steering Committee, we assisted in the development of a short guide on how the NCD should approach new potential members of the district, as well as what specifically should qualify a new business or organization to be considered a member for the district. If more businesses and organizations participate in the data collection process, the data that is collected to assess the impact of the cultural district events will be more comprehensive and useful.

- 2. The NCD should collect data from for-profit businesses using our data collection system integrated into the new website.*

In order to demonstrate the economic impacts of events in the district the NCD should collect non-sensitive business sales data. Data collection should begin as soon as possible, as it gives more time for businesses and organizations to find time to compile and submit their data. This process should be facilitated between the owners of the member organizations and the Steering Committee members. By fulfilling this recommendation, the NCD will be able to develop a more comprehensive annual report for the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

- 3. The NCD should designate someone specifically to manage and update the cultural district website as needed to keep it current and useful.*

Our third recommendation is that the Nantucket Cultural District designate someone specifically to update the website as needed to keep it current and useful. This should be completed as soon as possible so that the website is ready-to-use before the spring shoulder season begins.

- 4. The NCD should expand their current social media presence to include more platforms as well as post more frequently to increase outreach and public knowledge of the district and cultural events.*

The most important social media for the NCD to utilize is Facebook. We recommend the NCD additionally create profiles on Instagram and Twitter, but refrain from using YouTube, Reddit, Pinterest, or other social media sites as they are not suitable for the NCDs purposes. The use of social media will increase the knowledge and interest in the district as well as develop a platform for advertising. This should be completed as soon as possible so that the district and district events receive a maximum amount of exposure before the shoulder season begins in the spring.

- 5. The NCD Steering Committee should adopt a sustainable financial model.*

The NCD currently utilizes a financial model based on seeking grants from outside organizations such as ReMain Nantucket and the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Grants are not always a

sustainable financial model, so the Steering Committee should look into additional funding models to sustain the district in the long run.

6. The NCD should begin to track additional metrics pertinent to the district and grant applications.

To assist the NCD in seeking additional financial support using additional cultural district metrics not necessarily required by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, we have compiled a list of potential metrics from a variety of sources (other districts, grant-giving organization, etc.) to give the NCD a foundation of metrics they should look into tracking in the future.

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1: INTRODUCTION

Nantucket is a small island off the coast of Massachusetts, only about 14 miles long. Although small, it has a rich history. Originally occupied by the Wampanoag Native Americans, the island was colonized by English settlers in the 17th century. At the beginning of the 18th century, the potential of sperm whale oil was accidentally discovered. By 1715, this discovery had stimulated the Nantucket deep-sea whaling industry (History, 2016). Over time, the island developed a powerful whaling economy, which allowed the island to flourish for nearly 100 years. By the mid-18th century, Nantucket would become the whaling capital of the world (History, 2016). By the 1860's, diminishing whale populations coupled with the onset of the Civil War and the discovery of petroleum in the hills of Pennsylvania signaled the decline of the whaling industry and in turn, the economy of Nantucket (Philbrick, 2015).

The economy would eventually re-flourish, but under the influence of a different stimulus; tourism. This time, tourism would provide the new foundation for Nantucket's economy. Tourists from around the world are now drawn to the island for the abundant beaches, exclusive real estate, and rich cultural history. With a population that swells from 10,000 to 60,000 people in the summer season, Nantucket has developed into one of the most popular vacation and cultural destinations in the country (History, 2016).

Cultural Districts

All of the arts, customs, history, and beliefs that encourage the human mind and its abilities are a part of a community's culture. One way to consolidate a community culture and to ensure its sustainability and success, is to form a cultural district. These districts have defined geographical borders and their roles in a given community are adaptable to the specific needs of the area. Due to the inherent inconsistency between districts, the way to evaluate each district must also be different.

Massachusetts encourages the growth of culture around the state through the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC). The MCC is the legislative body that designates and supports Massachusetts cultural districts at the state level. The MCC requires an annual report from the district to be submitted every fiscal year. The goal of the report is to show how the district affects the local economy. With over 30 different cultural districts designated since 2011, the MCC is constantly designating new districts.

The Nantucket Cultural District (NCD) was officially designated in January 2016. The district was formed with the goal to centralize and expand the culture of the island, as well as to advertise the different aspects of the culture on the island to residents and tourists. However, since the district is so new, many ongoing strategies are still in the development stage. The district hopes to foster business cooperation and create collaborations called "linkages" between the many entities within the district. The district also needs measures of success to show that

their current strategies are working as intended. As such, certain metrics need to be developed, collected, and analyzed by the district in order to show the impacts of events, linkages, and the overall success of the district.

Project Statement

Our goal was to assist the Nantucket Cultural District create a system to collect and evaluate metrics that measure the economic and cultural impact of the district. The selected metrics would then be used to form an annual report for the Massachusetts Cultural Council. In addition, we made recommendations to the NCD regarding their internet and social media presence in order to increase awareness and to educate the public of their existence and purpose.

Project Summary

Starting in chapter 2, we will review the background of cultural districts and the NCD in order to inform and prepare the reader for our results. In the following section, we will specifically cover what a cultural district is, specific advantages and challenges of a designated cultural district, what the Nantucket Cultural District is, as well as different methods other cultural districts are using to collect, analyze, and report their data. For a more detailed outline of the background section, refer to Figure 1 below.

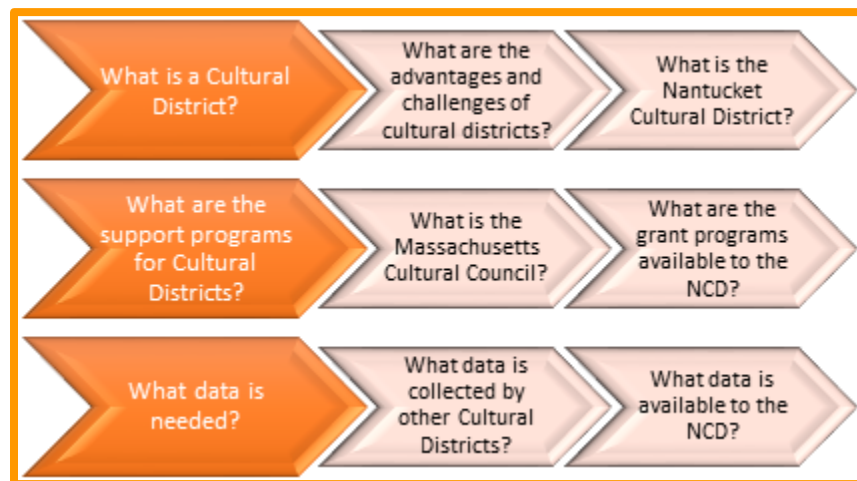


Figure 1: Outline of background chapter showing the general flow of topics discussed

In chapter 3 we will discuss how we determined which metrics are most appropriate to measure, how we intend to evaluate different collection methods for the selected metrics, and how we will evaluate presentation forms to represent the data that is collected. Finally, in chapter 4, we will discuss how we built a system for the NCD to use to collect and analyze selected metrics from the district.

2: BACKGROUND

In this section, we will describe background material that is pertinent to understanding cultural districts. We will first discuss what a cultural district is and examine the advantages and challenges that are involved with creating and sustaining a cultural district. We will then look at how these districts are funded, supported, and organized, especially in Massachusetts. Then we will look into the types of information and data that the cultural districts must or can collect in order to examine the correlation between them and the economic impact they have on the surrounding community. In each section, we will end by narrowing our focus onto our sponsor, the Nantucket Cultural District, and explain how the background material and ideas presented affect the NCD specifically.

2.1 What and Why of a Cultural District?

A cultural district is an area of a city or town consisting of a group of cultural organizations and supporting businesses. The purpose of a cultural district is to boost the local economy, connect cultural organizations in a community, attract tourists, and foster a sense of cultural community among the stakeholders (Thornton, 2012). Cultural districts help encourage communications between its stakeholders, which enables those organizations to better collaborate and work towards common goals, rather than work in competition with each other. For example, a cultural district can help facilitate ticket packages or coupon deals between restaurants and theaters so that they can both benefit from the increased influx of customers. Restaurants attract customers to theaters and vice-versa, leading to a “synergetic surplus” between the two (Thornton, 2012). The collaboration also expands upon the sense of community and culture between institutions, customers, and residents, as well as creating meaningful and beneficial relationships between business owners.

The economic benefits of a cultural district are often the primary reason behind their formation. However, cultural districts also have a way of both preserving and revitalizing older communities that can be described as “cultural deserts”. These cultural deserts can be places where industry has diminished and has left empty buildings in an economically depressed community. Detroit, Michigan is an unfortunate example of a cultural desert. Once a powerful automobile manufacturing hub, the closure of many car factories and the housing mortgage crisis left the local economy devastated, and the culture of the city has suffered as a direct result (Lin, 2014). Cultural districts are often considered when vacant and unused infrastructure leads to low property values, crime, and a lack of a sense of community. Areas like this can be repurposed by local government as “fertile grounds for redevelopment” (Thornton, 2012), which can then be expanded upon by the community.

There are four central types of cultural district;

- industrial
- institutional
- museum
- metropolitan

Industrial cultural districts are utilized to create a production center of culture by attracting both artists and businesses. Institutional cultural districts rely on a single establishment to centralize the cultural production in an area. Museum cultural districts consist of a set of closely related museums or historical galleries. The most common type of district, the metropolitan cultural district, consists of a mixed group of interconnected cultural institutions (Thornton, 2012).

Cultural districts can either form naturally, or a municipality may choose to pursue a specific district type in order to adapt to a city's needs and goals. Cities that seek the formation of cultural districts understand that community, diversity, and heritage are essential tools for the holistic and long-term development of an area. (Duxbury, et. al. 2016).

2.2 Advantages of a Designated Cultural District

Cultural district designations are commonly sought after for a multitude of different reasons. These can range anywhere from economic gains, to expanding an area's existing culture, to fostering commercial and residential unity and revitalization within a community. In addition, it is understood that cities with a strong culture and sense of community are more resilient and have a better chance of thriving in the long term (How Your Community Can Thrive, 2006) (Thornton, 2012). All of these reasons are desirable goals for a community to achieve, and a cultural district is often a worthwhile investment tool for a city (Noonan 2013). In this section, cultural district advantages will be discussed in a broad sense, then narrowed down to how these issues that directly impact the Nantucket Cultural District.

2.2.1 Economic Advantages

From an economic perspective, cultural districts offer opportunities to further develop local economic growth. The most important advantage to having cultural districts is simply the number of tourists that can be drawn into a specific area. Cultural districts have proven to increase out of town tourism, while increasing the amount of foot traffic, time, and money spent in a particular area. For example, a 2013 analysis of 99 different cultural districts throughout the United States showed that in general, there are notable positive effects of district formation on property values, employment levels, and income levels both within the districts, as well as areas within close proximity to the district (Noonan 2013).

A second economic advantage to a cultural district designation are the types of people that cultural districts attract. A vibrant arts and culture sector has been proven to provide an

enticing draw for young workers, especially those in high-skilled, high-paying technology jobs to move to a specific area. (Lutz, 2012) Talented artists, especially those related to design, performance, and communication, can greatly enhance the value of local products and services, as well as increase their dissemination throughout an area. Together, the technology sector along with the skilled artists (collectively dubbed “the Creative Class”), have been shown in many cases to contribute to an increase the economic value of an area, which is why having a creative district can be critically important to a city. (Dwyer, 2011)

A third major economic advantage cultural districts present are the opportunities to improve upon the harmony between the city, the community, and commercial businesses. Cultural districts play a major role in organizing both small and large-scale events that involve collaborations between stakeholders in the district. Annual events such as food, art, or film festivals, concert series, and holiday celebrations are all proven to be much more effective at being economically successful when cultural organizations work together, as opposed to operating independently (Thornton, 2012). An example of this can be found in Pasadena, California’s Levitt Pavilion. The Old Pasadena Cultural District worked with the Levitt Foundation, a group that works to financially enable local band shells to put on free concerts. The concert series ended up being remarkably successful, and is now credited with helping revitalize the downtown area into a popular tourist destination, all as a direct result of community, business, and city collaboration (Watson 2013).

2.2.2 Cultural Expansion, Quality of Life Advantages

By centralizing creative assets through clearly locating, labeling, and drawing increased attention to a community’s cultural assets, designating an area as a cultural district is a powerful way to foster additional value, both social and economic, to an area (Dwyer, 2011). One result of this is that cultural districts can lead to a better quality of life for those that currently work and live in the district. Being able to advertise a particular part of a city as creative and culture-rich creates a desirable reason for people to go there. Having this advantage helps attract new residents, allows current businesses to try new ideas, as well as encourages the development of new businesses within the district. With these developments, the culture of an area can continually evolve into something unique, which is a major key to attracting tourists. (Roos-Brown, 2013)

2.2.3 Community Involvement Advantages

Cultural districts are also a powerful tool to help foster resident involvement in the development of a community. One example of this can be found in Tucson, Arizona’s Garden District, a cultural district that covers one square mile in midtown Tucson (see APPENDIX F). We interviewed Ida Plotkin, the grandmother of one of the members of Team NCD, who also happens to be the president of a neighborhood association within the Garden District. Ms.

Plotkin stated that the district's goal is "to have more participation in the community, which is difficult because many people are refugees and many do not speak English" (Plotkin, 2016, September, Personal Communication).

She provided examples on what the association of the district did to provide opportunities for people to be involved. They accomplished this through a strong focus on internal communication for those within the district. The district members set up three kiosks and multiple newsletters to share information to both residents and tourists about their community. They proved to be a success, with nearly 50% of the community signed up for district newsletters. Through this district-wide newsletter, they were able to easily organize community events such as bird watching, free garden tours, and parties in community pavilions, all of which helps foster a noticeable sense of community within the district (Plotkin, 2016, September, Personal Communication).

Ms. Plotkin stated how they measure success of their Garden District. They measure community usage of the library for a number of programs such as homework help programs, children's story time, teen lounge usage, English literacy class attendance, and community meeting involvement. The district also measures the usage of their Botanical Gardens, taking data on landscaping and conservation efforts, as well as natural history and art exhibit attendance. Participation in community affairs is collected through measuring involvement in walking clubs, neighborhood watch groups, percentage of newsletter users, volunteer musicians' performances, and food trucks sales. Her group additionally meets monthly with the Tucson Police Department to get updates on levels of crime and other issues the community is facing.

In conclusion, the Garden District's community involvement programs have proven to be a success for the district. This district involved more people in the community and brought pride to those who live and operate within the district's signage. Increased community involvement had a powerful effect on making the district both safer and more desirable to visit (Plotkin, 2016, September, Personal Communication). In relation to the Nantucket Cultural District, while there are currently community efforts to maintain high levels of volunteerism and community development, none of them currently are organized under the oversight of the NCD committee. However, as the district is further developed, this is something that it hopes to change over time (Schulte, & Gonzales, 2016, September, Personal Communication).

2.3 Challenges of a Designated Cultural District

While cultural districts are known to have a wide range of advantages, there are additional considerations that must be taken into account. In particular, when cultural districts are designed to be used as a public policy instrument for local economies or for urban revitalization reasons, there can be negative socioeconomic consequences (Thornton, 2012). Additionally, the potential challenges a cultural district may face range anywhere from

gentrification, to the “Disneyfication” of an area, to the unfortunate reality that there is no guarantee of their sustained success.

2.3.1 Gentrification

Gentrification is defined as “the arrival of wealthier people in an existing urban district, a related increase in rents and property values, and changes in the district’s character and culture”. The term holds a negative connotation, as wealthy people moving into an area can displace the less well-off members of the community as a direct result of rising property values, as well as an increased cost of necessary goods and services (Grant 2003). Since cultural districts are known to bring an increased economic value to an area when wealthier, higher-educated people move closer to them, gentrification is a possible outcome. This is especially true if a cultural district is being used as a tool to reinvigorate the culture of a certain part of a city. Additionally, since cultural districts are usually centered in the downtown parts of cities, the resulting benefits are often only beneficial to those who live in the district. Outlying less well-off populations may be unable to benefit from the increased economic value of an area, which also can contribute to the risk of displacement from gentrification (Thornton 2012).

In the case of the Nantucket Cultural District, there is a unique issue that arises in regards to gentrification. Since the property values of Nantucket are already extremely high, the concern is not so much about pushing poorer members of the community out, but rather pushing middle-class year-round residents out. One concern the Nantucket Cultural District faces is the possibility that current property values will rise even higher. It could eventually result to higher costs of living for the year-round residents of the island, which could impact their financial ability to continue living on the island.

2.3.2 “Disneyfication”

Another major challenge to the sustainability of cultural districts is the eventual “Disneyfication” of the district. In a 2012 issue of *Advocate’s Forum*, contributor Sean Thornton defined the term “Disneyfication” as to how an area becomes “a whitewashed homogenization of consumption, merchandising, and labor in an effort to provide a more tourist-friendly atmosphere, generally at the expense of the local area’s cultural and infrastructural authenticity” (Thornton, 2012). The term is derived from Main Street, USA, a well-known Disneyland attraction that portrays an idealized “safe” district where real-world problems are nonexistent and corporate branding exists at every turn. In short, as cultural districts try to emulate this particular strategy in order to attract more tourists, extensive commercialization runs the risk of ruining aspects of what makes a particular culture unique and attractive.

An example of this can be found in the New Orleans French Quarter, a cultural district with a deeply-rooted history in Southern politics. The district here is located directly next to the Mississippi River in New Orleans. During a revitalization period in the 1990’s, there was

growing interest from local residents in having a riverfront park being a facet of the area. Instead, commercialization interests took over the project and over twenty years later there currently sits breweries, marketplaces, hotels, and casinos, all heavily stylized and marketed based on the deep historical culture of the area, much to the apparent chagrin of longtime residents (Souther 2007). Nantucket faces a similar challenge to the New Orleans French Quarter, they must keep local residents happy and respect the proud history of the island, without turning the area into a commercialized caricature of itself.

2.3.3 Lack of Sustainable Success

Another challenge that cultural districts must overcome is the fact that they are not always a sustainable venture, and long term goals of economic development and growth have proven difficult to achieve (Thornton, 2012). For example, a 1998 study profiled the Tucson Arts District Partnership, an arts district in Arizona that was praised for its positive impact on local jobs, sales, and tax revenues (Noonan 2013). Yet by 2001, the district was in decline, now consisting of tattoo parlors, bars, and clubs while theaters and art galleries sat empty. The major issue in this particular case was the city trying to use a cultural district to help revitalize a part of a city, without actually putting in the necessary funding to sustain the district. The lack of continued support and district mismanagement led to unreasonable rents for theater and gallery owners, which could only be alleviated by renting out extra storefront space to other businesses, which changed the culture of the area enough to lead to its decline. (Regan 2001). In order to be a sustainable success, the Nantucket Cultural District must be continually funded, monitored, and managed, while at the same time avoiding the same mistakes that led to the downfall of other cultural districts (Noonan, 2013).

2.4 The Nantucket Cultural District

The Nantucket Cultural District, shown in Figure 2, was officially designated in January of 2016, however the culture of the island of Nantucket has been informally present for many years through the many cultural organizations throughout the island.



Figure 2: A current map of the Nantucket Cultural District. The blue outline shows the boundary of the district. (Nantucket Cultural District Designated, 2016).

The Nantucket Cultural District Steering Committee, a group consisting of members of town government, local businesses, museums, and other organizations, hopes to play a key leadership role in promoting culture and arts on the island. Its current motto, “to enrich community life for residents and visitors and to enhance Nantucket’s economic strength through collaboration and promotion of our cultural organizations” outlines the direct goals of the NCD (Nantucket Cultural District, 2016). At the time of its founding, the mission of the cultural district was straightforward; the NCD Steering Committee wanted a mutually-beneficial harmony between organizations and businesses, with a major focus on getting more people downtown in the shoulder season. (Murphy, Schulte, & Gonzales, 2016, September 16. Personal Communication).

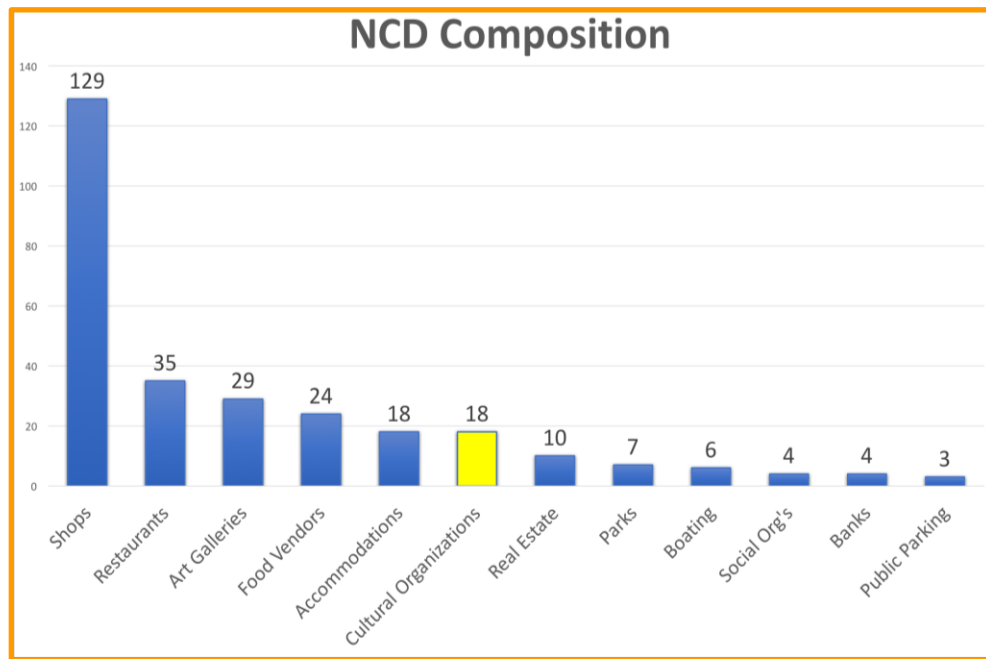


Figure 3: General Composition of the NCD organized by sector (Rondeau, 2016):

At the time of its designation, as shown in Figure 3, the district contained 16 cultural and social organizations, 18 hotels and inns, 29 art galleries, 35 restaurants, 23 food vendors, 129 shops, and 7 parks (Appendix A). Currently, the NCD encompasses most of the island's primary historic downtown core, however the district is still a work-in-progress.

As of September 2016, the district had limited funding. When the district was created, the district received a grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council for \$2,500, which was then matched by the Town of Nantucket for a total of \$5,000. This funding however had to go towards Nantucket Arts Council administrative costs for the registration of the district, which still means the district has little money to work with. This meant that necessary staples of a cultural district such as maps, signage, social media presence, and internet presence were currently in the development stage. As a result, the ability for district outreach was limited at the time. While the NCD had applied for additional funding, those proposals were currently in the process of being reviewed, and as such the district was still limited in the capacity of what it could accomplish financially (Murphy, Schulte, & Gonzales, 2016, September, Personal Communication).

2.5 Goals of the Nantucket Cultural District

The NCD is a new organization and therefore had a basic set of goals for its first year of operation. Their goals include improving public knowledge of the district, creation and support

of collaborations/linkages between member organizations, and to collect data on the economic impacts of the district. These goals were formed to align with the interests of the NCD as well as the MCC.

2.5.1 Improve Public Knowledge of the District via Social Media

One goal is to educate the public that the NCD exists. Physical media, internet presence, and social media are all important when developing community outreach for the district. For any modern organization, the key developing community outreach is to develop an online presence (Godwin, 2016). The NCD has already created physical media in the form of district brochures (Appendix C). While the NCD currently has a Facebook page and a dedicated page on the Nantucket Department of Culture and Tourism website, the information presented is currently limited, which is something they would like to further expand (Murphy, Schulte, & Gonzales, 2016, September 16. Personal Communication).

According to a Google study, 97% of all consumers use the web to search for local organizations. Therefore, having and utilizing an online presence as a component of your marketing strategy is an important facet to the sustainability of any organization, independent of the size or type (Godwin, 2016). In particular, an organization's website is the most important asset to their online presence. It works as a centralized location to sign up for events and services, to find contact information, or collect donations in a safe, time-efficient manner (Solutions Resource, 2016). Currently the NCD does not have an official website where visitors, curious about the organization, can find any of this and learn in-depth about everything the district has to offer.

Having a website serves as the basis for a wide variety of additional web presence opportunities. In particular, having a website serves as a location to reach additional social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and many others. When developing a social media plan, all social media presence must have a purpose, as well as realistic goals. The return on investment of the social media plan depends entirely on the feasibility of these goals, the wide-reaching ability to communicate, and informing the public specifically what they want to know about the district (Social Media Manager, 2016).

“(Social Media) allows customers, potential customers and other interested parties to engage easily via a channel that plays an important role in their everyday lives” (Godwin, 2016). Facebook for example, is fully capable of planning and advertising events, sharing pictures and videos, and directly interacting with visitors. Additionally, users can easily share Facebook media and events with their friends, which helps greatly with additional outreach (Hassan, 2014). Twitter and Instagram are both additional outreach platforms that have similar functions to Facebook. Twitter is a quicker, more direct microblogging platform. Information posted on Twitter is required to be under 140 characters, so information is presented in a short and simple fashion (Ward, 2016). Instagram is entirely visual media-focused, which makes a great place for

posting event posters, activity updates, and showcasing other engaging media. Additionally, Instagram is noted for having much higher audience engagement rate compared to other platforms, which is increasingly more important when building a brand identity (Istvanova, 2014).

2.5.2 Create Collaboration & Linkages Between District Members

Another goal of the NCD is to encourage businesses and institutions to collaborate and involve themselves in developing the district. The NCD hopes to do this by encouraging cultural organizations and businesses to create what they are referring to as “linkages”. Linkages is the term that the district is using to describe collaborations between businesses, cultural organizations, and the Town of Nantucket. One example that the Steering Committee gave for their idea of linkages is dinner at a restaurant, followed by a discount movie at a local theater. Another example of a linkage would be an event at a cultural institution catered by a local restaurant. Linkages like this currently exist in the district, however the Steering Committee would like to track them, as well as improve on both the quantity and quality of them (Murphy, Schulte, & Gonzales, 2016, September, Personal Communication).

The NCD hopes these linkages will become a way to help attract residents to the district during the difficult “shoulder season”. The shoulder season is informally defined as April to May and September to October. During this time period, the summer tourism economy is not in full swing, but the downtown area still is viewed as having an economic potential. Through these planned linkages, the NCD hopes to incentivize the residents that generally avoid going downtown to go downtown during these times of the year. (Murphy, Schulte, & Gonzales, 2016, September 16, Personal Communication).

2.5.3 Collect Data on the District

A third goal of the NCD is to encourage businesses and organizations to collect relevant economic data to represent the development of the district. The NCD needs this data from organizations to present to the Massachusetts Cultural Council, as well as for short and long-term internal planning. Additionally, with the focus on linkages, the NCD wishes to track the success of current events. This topic is outlined in much further detail in Sections 2.7, 2.8, and 2.9.

2.6 Supporting and Oversight Agencies

While cultural districts are primarily independent ventures put together by either a town government, an existing cultural organization, or a collective of businesses, they still require external oversight and funding to be successful. In Massachusetts, cultural districts are directly designated, organized, and supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. (Mass Cultural Council, 2016)

2.6.1 Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC)

The Massachusetts Cultural District Initiative was launched in April 2011 after state legislation was passed in 2010 to support and bolster culture throughout the state. This action led directly to the formation of the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC). As of early 2016, there are 32 official cultural districts in Massachusetts; all of which are designated, supervised, and partially funded by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. The MCC states that “These cultural districts help local arts, humanities, and science organizations improve the quality and range of their public programs... they attract artists, cultural organizations, and entrepreneurs of all kinds - enhancing property values and making communities more attractive” (Mass, 2016e).

In order to ensure the accountability of the districts, the MCC conducts yearly site visits, and requires annual reports that demonstrate the continued development and impact of existing cultural districts. The report may vary depending on the cultural district, however, it must show how the district is affecting the local economy. Every five years, the districts are required to renew their designation through the MCC, and cannot be renewed if their annual reports have not been submitted. These reports are also essential tools for the districts to gain funding through granting agencies and programs.

2.6.2 Massachusetts Cultural Council Grant Programs

There are different types of grants that can be given to projects by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. A specific grant that can be given to a cultural district by the MCC is called the *Cultural Investment Portfolio Grant*, which totaled \$143,618 to Massachusetts Cultural Districts for the fiscal year of 2016. In fiscal year 2017, the MCC plans to invest over \$4.5 million in nearly 400 nonprofit arts, humanities and science organizations through its Cultural Investment Portfolio program. (Mass Cultural Council, 2016)

The Cultural Investment Portfolio invests in general programming needs of cultural organizations. According to the MCC website, the Cultural Investment Portfolio (CIP) “provides unrestricted general operating support grants and project support grants to nonprofit organizations that provide public programs in the arts, sciences, and humanities in Massachusetts.” The amounts of grants given by the CIP are determined through a formula based methodology. Specifically, they are determined by an analysis of an organization’s expenditures, combined with a review of the total funds allocated to the Cultural Investment Portfolio by the MCC board based on “the agency’s annual legislative appropriation” (Mass Cultural Council, 2016). Examples of recipients of the CIP include museums, performing arts centers, music and dance programs, theaters, art studios, and many more. Individual grants ranged anywhere from \$2,500 for small projects, up to \$56,500 for museums (Mass Cultural Council, 2016).

The Massachusetts Cultural Council continually invests in the development of the state's creative centers through a few additional funding programs (see Figure 4). The *Local Cultural Council Program* (LCCP) seeks to promote the availability of cultural programs for

Massachusetts citizens. To do this, the program awards over \$3 million dollars annually to nearly 5,000 cultural programs, in support of field trips, after school programs, as well as concerts and performances. The *Cultural Facilities Fund* (CFF), a program that supports the “acquisition, design, repair, renovation, expansion, and construction of nonprofit and municipal cultural facilities” (Mass Cultural Council, 2016) will be allocating \$9.3 million dollars in grants ranging from \$7,000 to \$300,000 for the 2017 fiscal year. The *Adams Arts Program* (AAP), a program that provides support for individual projects that work to create and grow culture and awareness in a community. In the 2016-17 fiscal year, the AAP plans to distribute nearly \$745,000 to projects throughout Massachusetts ranging from grants to town governments to arts museums. (Mass, 2016 a,b,c,d) The *Cultural Investment Portfolio Gateway Program* is another program the MCC offers, it looks to provide preliminary support for new cultural ventures, so that they may apply for Cultural Investment Portfolio once programs have been officially established and proven to have cultural value (Mass Cultural Council, 2016).

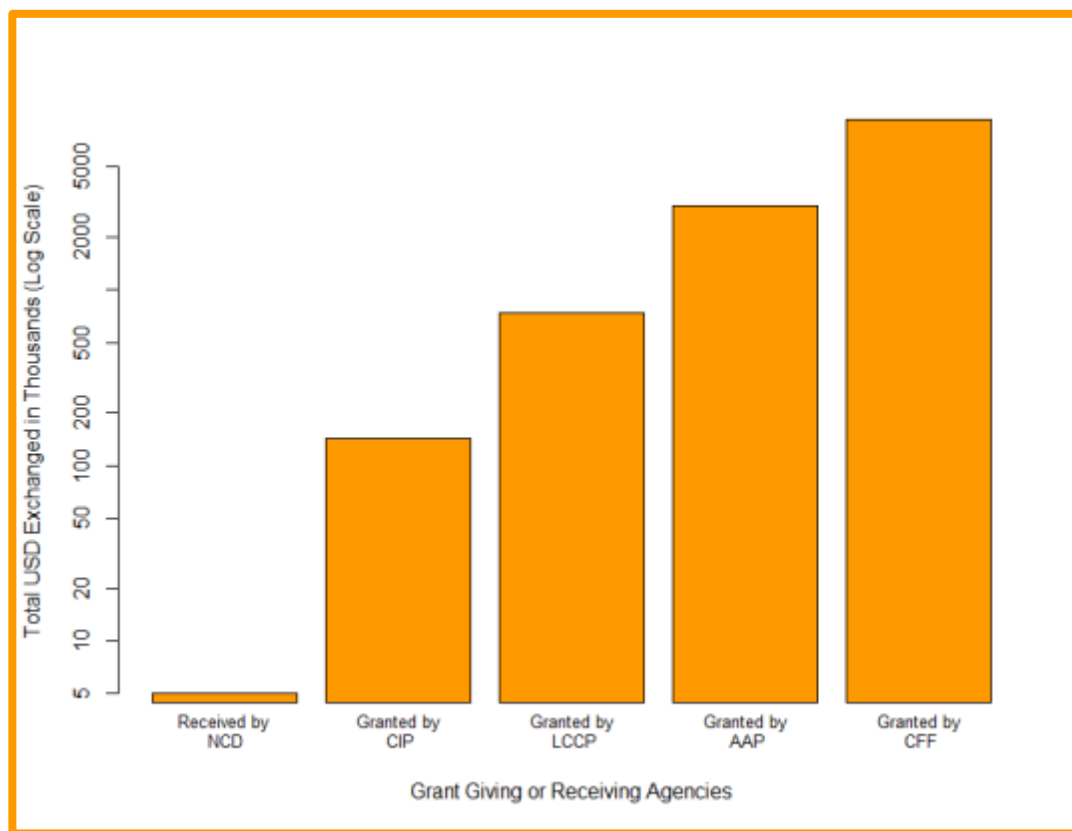


Figure 4: This figure compares the money received or granted by the MCC.

2.7 What Data Do Cultural Districts Require?

Data collection is the process of obtaining and analyzing information on predetermined variables in a way that enables one to test hypotheses and evaluate potential outcomes. (Data Collection, 2016). Since one of the objectives of our project is to develop metrics to collect data

about the Nantucket Cultural District, we must examine different forms of data and determine the most effective metrics for data collection.

While there are many opportunities and possibilities for collecting data in a cultural district, the challenge is to determine what data can be collected in an efficient manner and how that data can be used to support the development of grant proposals. Many of these grant proposals focus on the particular goals of the various state cultural councils. For example, in Colorado, cultural districts focus on utilizing the arts to create jobs and therefore, the data collected is designed to enable the state to assess the job creation impact of each cultural district (Figure 5). In Massachusetts, the state focuses on increasing attendance and therefore, measuring economic impact through cultural involvement. Specifically, Massachusetts requires commercial building occupancy rates, as well as attendance data to the cultural district (Figure 5).

SAMPLING OF STATE ARTS AGENCY CULTURAL DISTRICT METRICS	STATES USING THESE METRICS
Capital project data such as property enhancements, new constructions and rehabilitations	MD, NM, LA, KY
Change in the number of businesses (creative or other)	MD, LA
Occupancy rates and changes (commercial, residential, other)	MA, CO, LA, KY
Demographics of district beneficiaries	IN
District budgets (revenues and outlays from multiple sources)	CO, TX
District employment data (arts related or otherwise)	CO
District staffing or other operational data	IN
Local development incentives available (and changes in these incentives)	KY
Narrative of district accomplishments	MD, IN, KY
Nonprofit arts organization revenue data	IN, CO
Number of artists relocating to a district	MD
Number of artists	NM
Number of arts education activities	IN
Number of beneficiaries for district program activities	MA
Number of businesses and individuals taking advantage of tax incentives	MD, LA
Number of events and festivals	MD, KY
Number of jobs created (arts related or other)	CO
Number of partnerships achieved at the local level	MD, KY
Number of studio spaces and live/work spaces	NM
Number of visitors	MA, CO
Population data	TX
Property values (commercial, residential, other)	CO
Sales tax revenues (total or from a selected business type)	CO, LA
Value of historic preservation tax credits	NM, MD, LA
Value of other tax incentives such as admissions taxes	MD

Figure 5: Required Metrics for Cultural Districts, by State (Programs, 2014)

The limitation of using other districts as examples is the fact that there are few cultural districts in Massachusetts that fit the same economic model as Nantucket or that have existed long enough to have applicable experience. The list of metrics in Appendix B are ones that were identified as being both important as well as feasible for the NCD to look into further. Some of these metrics are easy for the district to compile, however other metrics such as local partnerships (linkages), economic impacts of cultural events, attendance data, and community knowledge of the district are more difficult. Since they are the more difficult ones to look into, and the district does not have the budget to hire an outside organization to collect this data.

2.7.1 Qualitative Cultural District Data

Qualitative data focuses on data that is non-numeric and non-specific. With an isolation to specificity, qualitative data collection enables observations to be tracked with ease, as they do not require in-depth numeric data. Collecting qualitative data can be easier, however drawing specific conclusions or showing relevant change without concrete number data becomes a difficult task. While qualitative data collection harbors many methods, the majority “can be classified in three broad categories: in-depth interview, observation methods, document review” (Data Collection Methods, 2001). The key point to gather from this is the broadness of which the categories are composed. This sharply contrasts with the specificity of quantitative data collection.

Nantucket becomes a major tourist destination during the summer season, with tens of thousands of people coming and going. Tracking metrics such as audience size and composition is difficult since many city-wide events are free to the public and lack physical boundaries and turnstile entrances (Stubbs, 2014). A common practice for qualitative tracking is “gauging whether attendance is higher, lower than previous years or simply receiving word-of-mouth positive feedback from visitors” and evaluating comments on social media have proven to be effective methods (Stubbs, 2014). While this type of data collection does not allow us to discretize cultural involvement, it does allow the MCC to create records for yearly comparisons. Another form of effective qualitative data collection is to utilize personal anecdotes and study them in aggregate. This is done through one-on-one interviews, surveys, and focus groups. Collecting and working with the residents, business owners, cultural organizations, and tourists to know what they view as valuable and worthwhile. While each person may have differing opinions, when viewed in aggregate, their opinions can provide insight into the effectiveness of any cultural event.

Tracking qualitative cultural impact can be a difficult task for a multitude of reasons. A study by the National Cultural Districts Exchange found that every district is too unique to utilize a generalized evaluation tool (Stubbs, 2014). This uniqueness is what prevents a common set of qualitative metrics or a standardized/universal collection practice that all districts can use. For

this project, the uniqueness provides an interesting opportunity to quickly isolate similar districts and generate effective solutions, which is elaborated on further in Section 2.8.

2.7.2 Quantitative Cultural District Data

Quantitative data focuses on the discrete, or the concrete information. This type of data collection focuses on fitting descriptions of the world into a finite set of “predetermined categories” (Data Collection Method, 2001). While many options exist for collecting this data the most common strategies for quantitative data collection include: “experiments/clinical trials, observing and recording well-defined events (e.g., counting the number of patients waiting in emergency at specified times of the day), obtaining relevant data from management information systems, administering surveys with closed-ended questions.” (Data Collection Method, 2001). A key point to notice from all of these methods is the specificity at which they are administered, quantitative data focuses on the specific and condenses the continuous spectrum that is cultural data to the discrete and finite.

Since the Nantucket Cultural District falls under the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the nature of the relationship between a large statewide agency and a small island community’s cultural district means finding proper quantitative metrics can be a challenge. However, the MCC understands the limitations of most local entities and therefore “requires that individual districts collect information on two specific indicators: visitation numbers and [building] occupancy rates.” (Stubbs, 2014), which can be collected across all districts. To fulfill the necessary requirements of the creation of the NCD, those two metrics must be reported annually, as well as lodging and meals tax data. To capture visitation numbers requires a measurement on the foot traffic of a region, or the quantities of business patrons to a region on a specified date. While this can be isolated to specific dates, occupancy rates pose another challenge because a rate imply that it is a dataset tracked over time. Therefore, it is necessary to track changes in residency and patronage correlated against an index of cultural events.

By only obtaining two data points the NCD will keep its status as a cultural district, but grant giving organizations wish to receive more data than just what is required (Mass Cultural Council, 2016). With a vast array of possible metrics and data points to track, determining how a small municipal system should track this information is vital to the continued success of the NCD. Therefore, our project must also look towards other metrics and determine the most commonly used metrics by other districts. Therefore, our project is not isolated to the data required by the MCC, instead the requirements serve as a base level suggestion for data collection.

2.8 What Data is Collected by Other Cultural Districts?

In order to determine more specific metrics to collect, it becomes necessary to look to other cultural districts in Massachusetts to see specifically what data they are collecting, how they are collecting it, and how they are presenting it to the Massachusetts Cultural Council. In order develop our data collection methodology, we looked into what three other Massachusetts cultural districts were reporting, specifically, we looked at districts located in Barnstable, Springfield, and Worcester, MA (Table 1).

Cultural District Title	Population	Seasonal	Age	Local Government Control	Founding Body	Reports on Business Activity	Funding Structure
Barnstable Village Cultural District	45,000-125,000	Yes	2 years	No	HyArts	No	Membership, Government
Springfield Downtown Cultural District	154,000	No	3 years	No	Springfield Business Investment District	Yes	Membership
Salisbury Cultural District	182,000	No	< 1 year	No	Worcester Art Museum	No	Grant-Based
Nantucket Cultural District	11,000-60,000	Yes	< 1 year	Yes	Nantucket Arts Council	No	Grant-Based

Table 1: Comparing the four Districts in Massachusetts discussed (Rondeau District Survey Sheet)

2.8.1 Barnstable Village Cultural District

The Barnstable Village Cultural District (BVA) (see Appendix F, Item 3) is a useful example to look at for two primary reasons. The first reason is because the BVA is a relatively older district compared to the NCD, having been designated in March 2014. Since it is older, it has been around long enough to have submitted two annual reports to the MCC and developed a metrics set of its own. A second reason it can be a useful source is due to its status as a seasonal destination located on Cape Cod, it receives a summer tourist influx similar to that of Nantucket.

The BVA collects participation for their events in order to see community and visitor involvement with the arts and culture of the town. Data was collected from a few willing businesses located downtown about seasonal income and increased purchases during events and festivals (Rondeau, 2016). An interview with BVA cultural district management yielded a few specific questions asked by the MCC. Specifically, they were asked “What are popular tourist activities, and how much do tourists spend in town? How many empty storefronts do you have? Is there any empty town space that a cultural institution is moving into? What are the venues for local artists?” (Rondeau, 2016). These metrics are important, as there are likely similar questions that the MCC will be asking to see in the NCD annual report.

2.8.2 Springfield Downtown Cultural District

The Springfield Central Cultural District (SCCD) located in Springfield, Massachusetts is a large cultural district encompassing a third of a square mile in downtown Springfield (see Appendix F, Item 4). Designated in January 2014, their mission statement is “to foster civic engagement and arts education in the City of Springfield by creating and sustaining a vibrant cultural environment that positions the City as the cultural capital of the region” (Springfield Central Cultural District, 2016). The Springfield district hopes to increase synergy between member organizations and an open communication through board meetings with updates and notices. As a result, the district hopes to increase resources, outreach, and collaborations between the cultural district organizations (Springfield Central Cultural District, 2016). Since the SCCD must also submit an annual report to the MCC, the SCCD can be used as a case study to examine how they report different metrics. In their 2016 annual report, the SCCD reported a few different, non-essential metrics to the MCC, specifically they focused on social media, as well as member and revenue statistics.

The 2016 SCCD annual report displayed that there was a 77% increase in new Facebook and Twitter followers, a 60% increase in social media “likes”, 358 unique social media posts, and 150x user engagement on all platforms versus 2015 statistics. Social media is important for a cultural district to inform people about local events, so having an increase in involvement with the district’s Facebook, Instagram, Twitter pages, etc. can show an increase cultural district involvement. (SCCD Annual Report, 2016).

The SCCD also listed their changes in funding and memberships versus the previous year. They listed metrics discussing how grant revenue was “up 483% from previous year, with 4 times the amount budgeted for.” The report also listed a metric about there being an additional 28 new members within the last year. Additionally, the SCCD report listed community created and supported initiatives the district helped put on, such as mural programs, art displays, and progress on the cultural district’s website (SCCD Annual Report, 2016). Both of these metrics are reasonable consider collecting within the scope of the Nantucket Cultural District, as they have both an emerging social media presence, as well initial first year member and funding data they can report (Murphy, Schulte, & Gonzales, 2016, September 16, Personal Communication).

2.8.3 Salisbury Cultural District (Worcester)

The Salisbury Cultural District, located in Worcester, MA and founded in summer 2015, is another unique example to look at for cultural district metrics (see Appendix F, Item 5). This cultural district is significant to our project as Worcester Polytechnic Institute was a founding member of the district, and is geographically located within the district. Having this link to a cultural district allowed us to use our university connections to reach out to a few members involved in the framing of the district. Specifically, we reached out to Linda Looft, the Assistant

Vice President of Government & Community Relations and University Relations, as well as Erin Williams, the Cultural Development Officer for the City of Worcester.

Through our interview with Mrs. Looft, we learned a few things about how WPI collects attendance data at large events hosted at the school, as well as how different organizations in the district benefit from each other. Specifically, they use a program called *iModules* that tracks registration demographics for events hosted at the university, such as the *TouchTomorrow* Festival or Robotics tournaments at the school. Additionally, she enlightened us as to how a few other members of the Salisbury District were working together to bring more people into the district. An example she gave was how the nearby Worcester Art Museum was offering free admission days during major exhibit openings, which resulted in large crowds being drawn to both the museum and the nearby organizations. The Worcester Art Museum additionally hosts a farmer's market in their parking lot, which has shown to both draw people to the museum and help local farmers. These events, as well as those put on by WPI and other members of the district, bring large amounts of foot traffic to the district, which greatly impacts the number of people that go to local restaurants, as well as the surrounding parks and institutions. (Looft, 2016, October, personal communication).

Our interview with Ms. Erin Williams, Executive Director at Worcester Cultural Coalition, gave us a larger insight to how the City of Worcester measures cultural impacts of both the Salisbury Cultural District, as well as the citywide Worcester Cultural Coalition (WCC). The WCC was described as “a macro-level cultural district” that included 78 organizations throughout the entire city of Worcester. The Salisbury District is considered “a microcosm of the Worcester Cultural Coalition” by comparison, so many of the Salisbury Cultural District's metrics and data collection strategies are taken directly from the WCC. The major strategies that we discussed were online presence, attendance data collection techniques, and business data.

Addressing each of these, for social media they hired someone for six months in order to setup and maintain their social media accounts initially. After that period, they transferred social media control to WCC members since they had a basic framework to work with. They also manage a weekly email newsletter (with nearly 30,000 subscribers) and a WPI-created website that lists and advertises events in the greater Worcester area. For attendance data, they utilize a specific few strategies. Member organizations submit their attendance data directly to the WCC, however for open area events or festivals, they draw on a few different techniques. Specifically, they work with Worcester Police to estimate people per square foot for open outdoor events, as well as perform car counts and utilize orange snow fencing to create dedicated entrances for events, so that guest throughput can be estimated better. This data was clarified to be estimated for final counts, as opposed to completely accurate. Business attendance and profit data for is also collected and utilized by the WCC. In order to do this, they work with a few businesses throughout Worcester. When asked about how the WCC convinces businesses to allow the Coalition to use their data, Ms. Williams maintained that in order for businesses to be willing to

submit their it must be completely anonymized first so that nothing proprietary about the business' operations are compromised. Through these three metrics, the WCC builds an accurate estimation of success for ongoing Coalition activities (Williams, 2016, October 13, Personal Communication).

2.9 What Data is Available to the Nantucket Cultural District?

For the Nantucket Cultural District to receive grants, there must be proof that the grant is needed and that the grant will be utilized effectively. To meet both of those standards requires insight into the types of data grant organizations are looking for. Determining common metrics becomes an important goal for both our group and the Nantucket Cultural District. The type of data we collect and the methods we use for collection revolve around the type of approach we would like to take when creating a model for the Nantucket Cultural District. For modeling Social Sciences, there are four main approaches; the representative, the heuristic, the power, and the sociality. Each of these approaches has their own merits, but to gather insight into the NCD, our group will construct a representative function and a sociality function. The representative function is utilizing data collection and analysis to simplify and quantify cultural impact. The sociality function is created by utilizing external methods for analysis and building off of the work of other researchers to determine what is truly necessary. (Mohr, Rawlings, 2012)

Nantucket has many different data sources available to track the cultural district activity and impact. Some will show clear connections and others may be more unclear, therefore, utilizing a mix of quantitative and qualitative is a necessity. Not only is the data itself important, but so is the tracking, analysis, and security of this data to ensure that it can continue to be collected.

3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to present the general methods we used to achieve our project goals. As depicted in Figure 6, the process started with background research, where we conducted research on the methods of data collection by other cultural districts. In the assessment section, we discuss our approach for determining which metrics we decided to look into collecting. In data collection, we explain the process for evaluating different proposed data collection methods. In the data analysis section, we detail our criteria for determining a system to analyze the selected metrics.

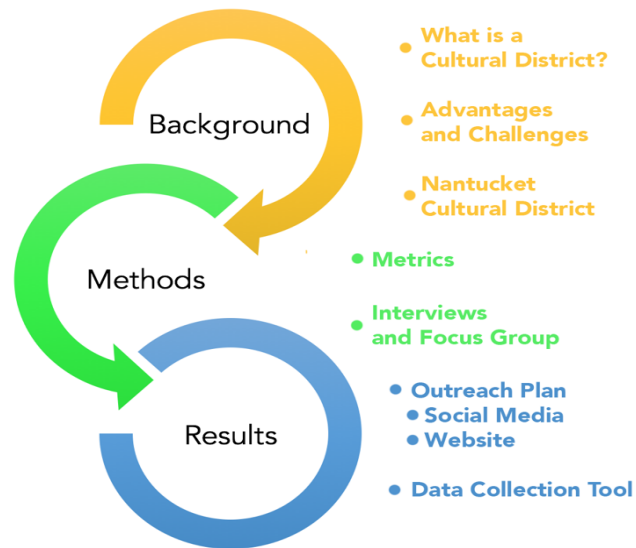


Figure 6: This flowchart represents our methods for how we accomplished our goal.

3.1 Mission Statement

Our goal was to assist the Nantucket Cultural District by developing a community outreach plan and creating a system to collect and evaluate metrics to measure the impacts of the district. To achieve this goal, our team did the following:

- Determined the most appropriate metrics for understanding the economic impact of the Nantucket Cultural District
- Determined the means to efficiently collect the data that represented the selected metrics
- Created criteria for a system to analyze, present, and archive the collected data.

The methods to achieve each of these objectives are detailed in the following sections.

3.2 Objective 1: Determining the most appropriate metrics for calculating the economic impact of the NCD.

The NCD Executive Steering Committee asked us to select a set of metrics to collect data from the district in order to demonstrate the performance of NCD to the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Ideally, the selected metrics would represent the impact of the Nantucket Cultural District on tourism, resident life, and the local economy.

3.3 Objective 2: Determining a means to efficiently collect selected metric data

Qualitative Data

Our sponsors suggested we communicate with specific stakeholders involved in the cultural district through interviews, focus groups, and surveys. These stakeholders included cultural organization owners, business owners, and residents. Gathering qualitative data using these strategies allowed the general public as well as the selected cultural district participants to share their opinion on the progress of the NCD. The results of the qualitative data were used to determine the best means to collect quantitative data.

The first method we proposed was to perform preliminary interviews with cultural organizations, businesses, and residents. The goal of these interviews was to determine their current knowledge of the cultural district as well gauge their willingness to cooperate with or become a member of the NCD. We wished to learn what type of data they are already collecting, how they are collecting it, how they are archiving it, and which types of data they were willing to share with the NCD.

Working with our liaisons, we identified the key informants in the cultural district such as the Steering Committee and Executive Steering Committee board members. We planned to use the first interview to gauge how our interview plan was working and then adjusted our interview guide to the resulting feedback. Using the questions listed in Appendix E, we tailored our interview guide specifically to the stakeholder in question. Prior to any discussions with stakeholders, we provided the interviewee with an IRB consent form and informed them that we would record the interview audio for our records [Appendix G].

We additionally planned to collect qualitative data using focus groups. The target demographic of these focus groups was intended to be members of the NCD Steering Committee and Executive Steering Committee and was planned to include 1-2 facilitators, 1-2 secretaries, and other invited guests. The objective of the focus group was help form a clear idea of how the recommended data collection system and data analysis and presentation methods were recognized by the Steering Committee members.

Quantitative Data

From our study of other cultural districts, we created an initial list of possible metrics (Appendix B). We then created a set of criteria to determine if the proposed metrics would be applicable to the NCD. We based our methods for selecting quantitative metrics on the following criteria:

- Non-sensitive to business data
- Already collected or easily collected by member organizations
- Able to be representative of economic impacts
- Realistic for the NCD to collect from the member organizations

The process which we choose to recommend was influenced by the results of our qualitative data from our focus group and interviews.

3.4 Objective 3: Creating a system for analyzing and archiving the collected data.

The goal of this objective was to develop criteria for a system to help the Steering Committee determine the impact of both cultural linkages, as well as cultural district events. These criteria included:

- Having one easy-use tool that required minimal training
- Able to collect and consolidate data from many different sources
- Keep data and information confidential
- Easy analysis of data and be able to track economic changes in correlation with cultural district events (Appendix C, D)
- Track linkages and collaborations between organizations
- Incentivize organizations/businesses to input their data
- Easily accessible for everyone.
- Easily scalable for use by small and large organizations
- Easily adaptable for future changes

4: FINDINGS

In this section, we will present our findings. We start this section by presenting some additional background information that is pertinent to understanding how we arrived at our findings. This background material is then followed by our detailed findings.

Background

When we first arrived on the island, we had a long discussion with our liaisons about the direction we should take for the beginning of the project. This conversation led us to focus on tracking economic fluctuations within the district, collaborations between businesses and nonprofits, as well as tracking attendance at smaller, non-festival events. Our liaisons also provided clarification that they would not like us to track previously established, larger events such as the Christmas Stroll or the Daffodil Festival.

Based on our initial discussion, we tentatively proposed that the NCD track changes in attendance and changes in gross sales at local businesses at times surrounding small scale events and any linkages (collaborations). In order to make sure our proposed ideas were viable for the district, we set out to interview 10 members of the business community in order to determine the best way to collect data on the selected metrics. In addition to these data discussions, we developed and implemented a list of questions for interviewing (see Appendix E) that we thought would be useful for future district planning outside the scope of the project.

4.1 Background Research Findings

During the course of our project, we conducted background research on the topic of cultural districts worldwide. From this research, we discovered many findings that were pertinent to our project and our sponsors. These findings and their significance are described in Table 3 below.

Finding	Significance
The MCC requires cultural districts to file an annual report to show CD economic impacts	The NCD must file a report to the MCC containing information and data that shows economic impacts by the end of the fiscal year.
The MCC requires cultural districts to track attendance and building occupancy rates	The Nantucket Cultural District must track cultural event attendance and building vacancy rates for their first annual report.
A guideline of metrics that cultural districts should track does not exist	The individual cultural districts may choose what metrics they choose to track and report.
Funding and governance structures of cultural districts vary	The individual cultural districts can choose how they would like to be funded, taking into account the composition of the district, the governance structure, and the managing organization.
Cultural districts have a wide range of advantages and challenges	With the development of a cultural district, there are many considerations that must be taken into account in order to ensure the success of the district.
Nantucket has a unique economic and cultural environment	The developed and wealthy nature of Nantucket creates a unique situation that separates the NCD from most other cultural districts.

Table 2: This table displays the different findings that we discovered while conducting our background research as well as the significance of each to our project.

4.2 Interview Findings

The first step we took towards the data collection process was qualitative data collection through interviewing key informants and stakeholders involved with both the cultural district and the downtown area as a whole. We interviewed a wide variety of people, including shop owners, restaurant owners, art gallery owners, cultural organization leaders, and NCD Steering Committee members. We asked a wide variety of questions (Appendix E), inquiring both into their status as a business owner or organizational representative, as well as a year-round resident of Nantucket.

Through these interviews, we learned what issues the members and potential members of the cultural district were facing. Listed below are the general findings from the results of our interviews.

- Many community members do not currently know about the cultural district or its purpose.
- Many businesses and organizations use flyers, the local newspaper (The Inquirer and Mirror), N-Magazine, word of mouth, and local radio for their advertising needs.
- Many people use social media for obtaining and relaying information about events that occur on the island and in the district.
- There are too many newsletters from the various organizations and businesses on the island. Many people just delete them.
- Businesses generally only track inventory and sales data, while nonprofit organizations track attendance data.
- Many businesses change their target demographics during the off season (November-March) and shoulder season (September-October, April-May) to make their products more accessible to residents.
- Many businesses have collaborated in the past, but not often. On average once or twice per year.
- Businesses were not likely to share their total gross sales, but they would likely share percentage changes in gross sales if they were asked and the data was kept anonymous.
- Weather and parking are major issues that keeps residents from visiting the downtown.

Additionally, a few things learned in the interview process were determined critical to organizing our project activities. For example, we found that the NCD Executive Steering Committee requires its member organizations to report attendance data for one on-season event and one off-season event to the Nantucket Arts Council (abbreviated NAC; the managing entity for the NCD) for the first fiscal year of the NCD. As this was related to data metrics and collection, we spoke with NAC leadership about their current data collection techniques. At the time of the interview, the NAC's strategy was to take attendance information from cultural district members, but there was no required uniformity to how the data could be submitted, which made the attendance information difficult to sort and analyze. This finding was particularly critical to our own study since we used it as a basis for our recommendations regarding the development of a data submission tool that could consolidate the attendance information into one single place (described in-detail in chapter 5).

From the interviews, we additionally found that most residents of Nantucket get their information about events from a local scheduling website [Mahon About Town](#), as well as the local newspaper, radio, and social media. However, we also found that the residents often made comments that there was not a central location that included a consolidated calendar of culturally significant events occurring downtown. These two findings were important because they emphasized the need for a consolidated calendar of cultural events.

A final important finding from the interview process was that the public has limited knowledge of the district, but nearly every member of the community uses some form of social media that they check daily. After learning that the Nantucket Cultural District only has a limited social media presence consisting of a monthly-updated Facebook page, we determined that a

social media outreach plan that outlines what they should post, how often they should post, and which platforms they should utilize would benefit the district and provide a platform to increase social media presence.

5: RESULTS

In this section, we will describe the deliverables that we gave to the NCD including our data collection and analysis tool and our website. We will first describe the features that we, along with the NCD Executive Steering Committee, decided were necessary of our data collection tool. We then explain how our tool is set up and what programs we used to incorporate the necessary features. We then explain how our tool works and what it will do for the NCD. We will also discuss our website, how we determined what features we aimed to include in it, and then go on to describe which features we were able to include and how the features work. For the deliverables; the data collection and analysis tool and the website, we developed a tutorial and provided written reference documentation to the NCD. This will allow the NCD Steering Committee and/or administrator to make changes to either the data collection and analysis tool or the website when needed.

5.1 Data Collection and Analysis Tool

In order to select an appropriate platform for the data collection tool, we developed a list of attributes that the platform had to be able to manage and support. Subsequently, we selected a data collection and analysis platform, configured it to support the types of analysis we required, and created a method for the data to be easily entered into the selected platform. To start, below is the list of features we identified that the platform needed to support:

Feature	Reason
Submitted data can be kept anonymous	Members of the business community agreed to submit data only if it was kept anonymous.
Be able to automatically create visualized representations of the data (graphs, charts, etc.)	Visualized representations are needed for simple and powerful data analysis.
Easily distributable to members	District leadership will not want to waste their time on a system that is difficult, and neither will members that are expected to fill out the tool.
Cost-effective	The district does not have the budget for expensive software, they require something that is either free or affordable.
Able to adapt to changes in metrics, easy to use	The system should be easy to change and be adapted to future district needs.

Table 3: This table lists the features of our data collection tool and the reason they were deemed necessary by the NCD Executive Steering Committee.

Using these features as a guide, we identified that with respect to features and the cost of the platform, our best choice to develop this system was to utilize the free Google collaborative

software suite. Specifically, we decided on utilizing Google Forms for the collection interface and Google Spreadsheets for data organization and analysis. Google Forms was specifically chosen for its ease of use, the general familiarity many people have using Google software, as well as the ability for submitted data to be automatically entered into a Google Spreadsheet. Below in Figure 7, we show how the different Google Forms enter data into a single Google Spreadsheet. In Google Spreadsheets, submitted data from the Google Form can be automatically sorted into categories based on a few different qualifiers, such as if the data was the result of a linkage or a cultural event. Further, the data is then easily analyzed using Google Spreadsheet capabilities to sort data, develop graphs, and create visualizations of the data trends.

Cultural Organization Data Collection

The Steering Committee of the NCD has asked the cultural organization members of the district to submit data on attendance of two significant cultural events, one that occurs in the on-season and one that occurs in the off-season. This data will then be used by the NCD in their annual report to the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Prior to our arrival, the district members did not have a uniform way to submit their attendance data. This made analysis and preparation for the MCC annual report a time-consuming effort. To solve this, we built another Google Form for cultural organization members to uniformly submit their data. In this form, we ask the cultural organizations to submit information such as name of the organization, date of the event, name of the event, weather, and number of people in attendance.

The information we collect for cultural organizations will then be uploaded directly to a Google Sheet. This sheet is setup to create graphical representations of the collected data than can then be used for the annual report. One way we show this data is by using a line graph to show attendance trends over time by event (Figure 8). In Figure 8, each line represents a different event, the x-axis displays the year and the y-axis represents the number of people that attended each event. The NCD will be able to use the raw data in conjunction with the tool to create many different types of graphs.

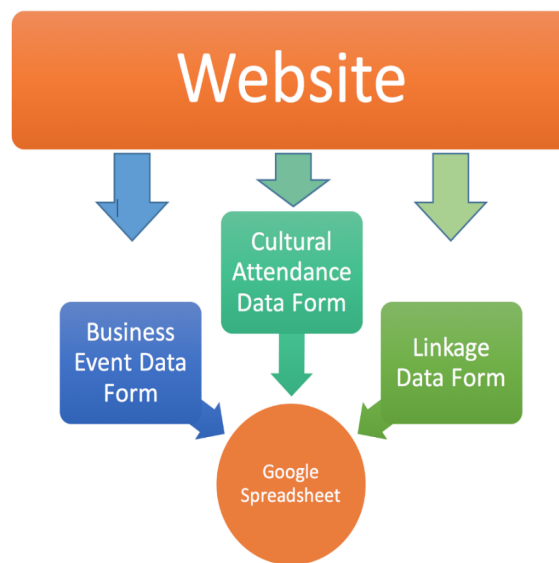


Figure 7: This figure shows how the data collection and archiving process takes place.

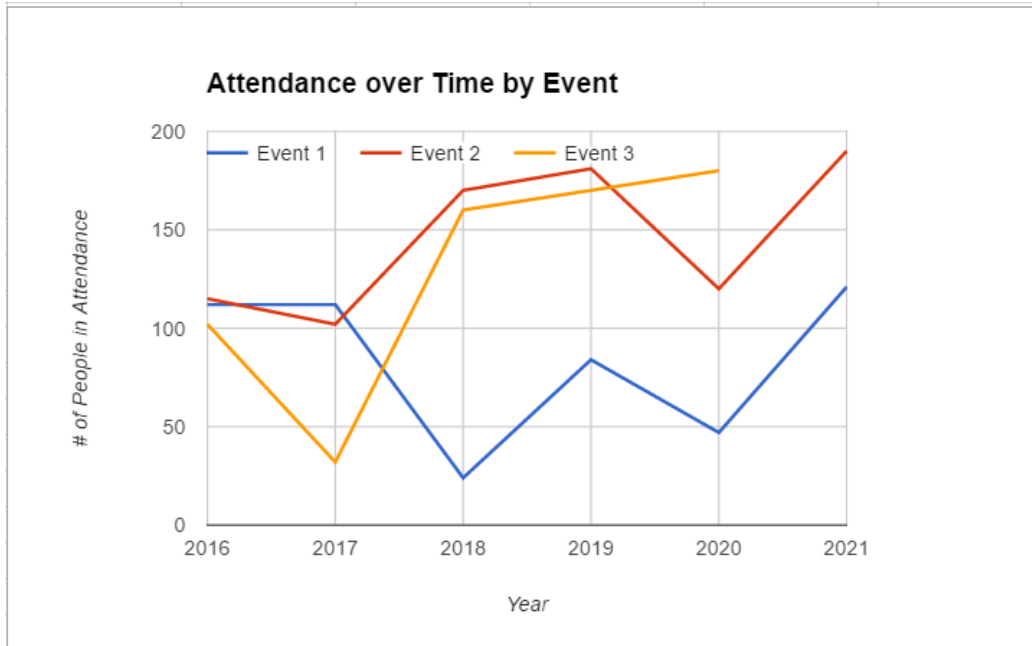


Figure 8: This graph displays trends in attendance at cultural events as reported by the cultural organizations. A positive slope shows that attendance has increased from the previous year. A negative slope shows that the attendance decreased when compared to the previous year. The data shown is for presentation purposes only and is not real data.

Business Data Collection

For businesses, the Google Form is setup to collect percentage change in gross sales from three days, each one exactly a week apart with the middle day being the day of an event. For example, the participating businesses would be asked for their percentage change sales data from the Thursday prior to the event, the Thursday of the event, and the Thursday after the event. The percentage change we are trying to obtain is a whole number, where zero signifies no change in sales, a positive percentage is a positive increase, and a negative percentage indicates a decrease.

From this specific set of data, we can estimate the economic impact that cultural events had on the local economy based on the aggregate change in business in the district, which would be calculated automatically as a function of the Google Sheet. As displayed in Figure 9, data will automatically be input into graphical representations showing percent change in gross sales during an event. Ideally, if many members of the district submit data from a wide variety of organization types, the data will show an overall trend of how cultural events affected businesses. If a negative trend is noticed, then it gives the NCD Steering Committee insight into how different events affect business.

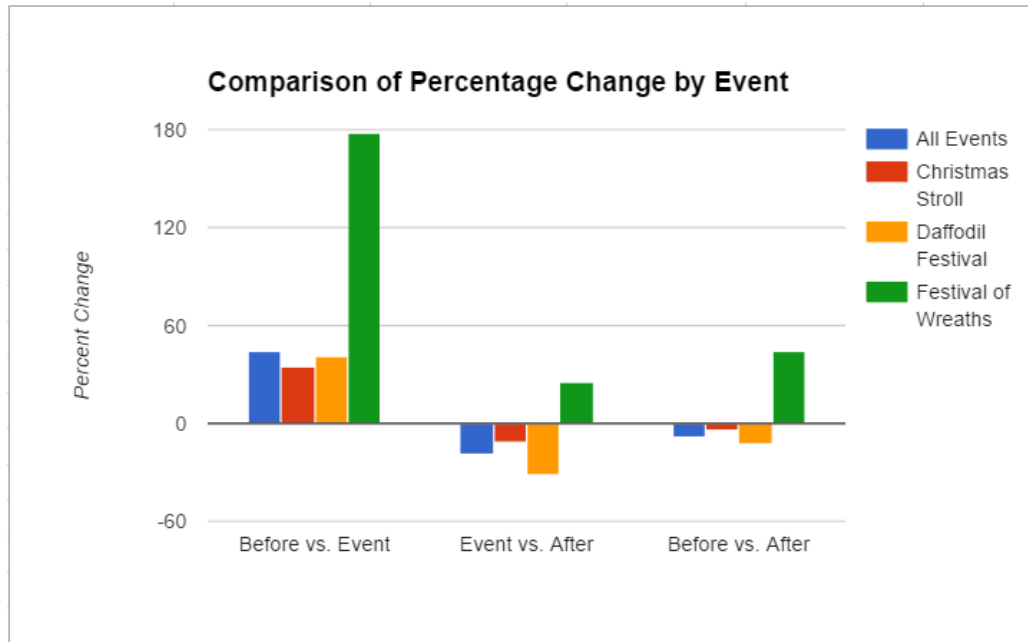


Figure 9: This graph displays trends in gross sales before and after events. The data represented currently is for presentation purposes only and is not actual data. A value of zero percent indicates no change from the previous week. The last metric indicates the percentage change in business between the week before the event and the week afterwards, this is a calculated value that shows the lasting impact of these events.

Linkage Data Collection

In addition to the Business Event Data and the Cultural Attendance Data, we also set up a Google Form to collect information regarding collaborations between businesses and cultural organizations, also known as linkages. Using the Form, we collect information such as the name of the linkage, the date it occurred, how they feel the event affected them, the weather, and their change in gross sales before and after the event. In Figure 10, we show a screenshot of the Linkage Google Form that we use to collect data from businesses and cultural organizations. For questions like “How do you feel this event affected your business” and “What was the weather like the day of your Linkage”, we utilize a Likert type scale.

A Likert Type scale usually consists of a numerical range from one to five. A selection of a one, indicates a completely negative opinion, and a five indicates a completely positive opinion. A choice of three is completely neutral. This scale enables an opinion to be measured objectively, by creating an ordinal ranking of a subjective measurement and thus removing ambiguity. While this opinion data does not indicate the economic impact of the festivals or events, it is valuable for event planning and business administration. For example, an event with poor reviews may need changes in order to make improvements for the following year. Conversely, high Likert scale rankings may determine that similar events will be beneficial to both cultural organizations and businesses (McLeod, 1970).

We then ask for percent change in gross sales from the business that is submitting data on the linkages. To ensure that this data set is calculated consistently and accurately, we created a Percent Change Calculator.

How do you feel this event affected your business? *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Completely Negative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Completely Positive

What was the weather like the day of your Linkage? *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Absolutely Horrible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Beautiful Day

What was the percentage change in business between 7 days before and the day of the Linkage? *

Your answer _____

What was the percentage change in business between the day of the linkage and 7 days afterwards? *

Your answer _____

Figure 10: This figure shows a portion of the Linkage Google Form used to collect data from participants.

Percentage Change Calculator

One challenge that may arise with our data collection and analysis tool is the inconsistency of how certain data is calculated. To resolve this issue, we developed a Percentage Change Calculator which will ensure consistent calculation of metrics. This calculator is embedded in a Microsoft Excel document that the user can download off the NCD website. The user inputs the date of the linkage or event, which the calculator will then use to determine which dates the user needs to enter gross sales data for. Then the calculator will use this gross sales data to output a percent change that the user will copy and paste into the Google Form as asked. The Excel calculator is directly downloaded to the user's computer, so any confidential information is kept local on their device and therefore kept anonymous.

5.2 Website

One of the Nantucket Cultural District's primary goals was to increase cultural district awareness. We determined that because the Steering Committee had already developed physical media such as maps and brochures (Appendix C), the next step they needed to take was to develop an increased internet presence. Prior to our project, the district's web presence was limited to a single page on the Town of Nantucket Department of Culture and Tourism website.

We proposed to the Executive Steering Committee that we expand the current internet presence into a fully-featured, independent website. The Steering Committee had already purchased a website domain name for the district, so we set out to create a website as a deliverable for our project. We prepared a list of website features that we and the NCD Executive Steering Committee agreed upon would be necessary for a successful website. Below in Table 5, the features of the website are listed, as well as the reasoning behind why we determined each feature was justified.

Feature	Reason
Fully supported and accessible on a mobile device, tablet, and desktop.	The website needs to work on as many platforms as possible, especially mobile versions as they are most likely to be accessed while someone is visiting the district.
Promote district activity through a calendar.	Events are primarily used to drive traffic to the cultural district. If residents and tourist are unaware of these events, they will not be incentivized to visit the district.
Serve as a centralized place for all district social media.	More sources of exposure leads to more outreach for events, pictures, and other information in the district.
List all district member organizations and their information.	Direct links to member organizations is an incentive for members to be active in the district. Traffic to the district website can result in increased web and foot traffic to the member organizations.
Easy-to-access, detailed map of the district.	Tourists, who may need directions and a map of the district, need an easy place to refer to a map. Not everyone is going to wander the district in search of a map.
Login-secured location for members to enter data that is not accessible to the public.	The website needs to include a location for businesses and organizations to access the data collection tool. This would allow them to submit their data in a secure fashion and on their own time.
Facilitate member networking to foster linkages.	A major focus of the Steering Committee is fostering linkages, so having an easy way for those connections to develop was identified as a welcome additional feature.

Table 4: This table lists the wanted features of our website as well as the reasoning which determined why we needed the feature.

We decided that the best website builder for our project was the Wix.com platform. There were two reasons for selecting this platform. First, Makeawebsitehub.com ranked Wix.com in its “Top 6 Website Builder Platforms” (Best, n.d.). Their review states that Wix is an easy-to-use, full-featured website building platform with competitive pricing. Secondly, the team had previous experience with the Wix platform, which made it a justifiable choice for us to build the district’s website in a timely manner.

The website went through multiple drafts over the course of its development. The feedback process involved the use of a focus group with the Steering Committee members providing insight and discussion. Feedback from the focus group resulted in us adding a comprehensive calendar of district events, featuring member organizations in the banners, showcasing pictures from district events, as well as general layout changes.

To set up the calendar of cultural district events, we used our liaison connection with the Department of Culture and Tourism to utilize their current Google Calendar feeds (Appendix H: Item 2.1). Through this working with the town's Special Events Coordinator, the cultural district calendar synchronizes directly to the Department of Culture and Tourism's calendar. This arrangement allowed the calendar to be limited to specific cultural events taking place within the district, as well as those occurring at partner organizations outside the district.

We determined that the best use of the welcome page was to include a scrolling banner to feature both district organizations and their events. Each organization or major event may have a space on the banner including a picture, description, and clickable link. This allows a website visitor to quickly explore and learn about organizations/events in the district. It also helps the visitor to quickly gain a better understanding of what culture means to the district and the community (Appendix H).

We determined that we wanted the website to feature a dual-role as an educational tool for visitors as well as a platform for businesses and cultural organizations to access the data submittal tool that our team also developed. The website features a page that is only accessible to district members. To access this page, the user creates an account which they can then use to request permission to access the page. The administrator of the website then grants access to the user to view the member page. This members-only page allows easy access to the data submittal tools, a form to add events to the calendar, and access to the website forum, which is discussed below. (Appendix H: Item 5)

To facilitate an increase in the number of cultural linkages present in the district, we introduced a forum to the website. The forum provides a space for the members to interact with one another and form collaborations. For instance, a museum could be hosting an event and need someone to cater food for the event. The museum may post on the forum and interested restaurants can reply directly. This tool will encourage communication and collaborations within the district and help to instill a sense of community.

6: RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section, we will explain our recommendations for the NCD sorted by importance, starting with what we believe is the most important and immediate recommendation. The time scale is the same for all six recommendations, which is simply “as soon as possible”.

1. The NCD Steering Committee should expand their number of partnerships.

To do this, the NCD begin expansion efforts, as they are currently quite small. To do this, they need to invite new members must to the district so that knowledge and support of the district spreads throughout the residential, business, and seasonal communities. We left them with a short guide on how they should approach new potential members of the district, as well as what specifically should qualify a new business or organization to be considered a member for the district.

This toolkit guide specifically outlines what being a member of the cultural district entails, including requirements and benefits. This includes (outside of the physical location requirements of being located within the district boundaries) that members must actively promote and support art and cultural events in the district. Additionally, in order to be continually considered a member, the business or organization are expected to submit event data to the Steering Committee through the data collection tool. We recommend that they also make sure that members of the cultural district actively promote using the different district media types. This could range from handing out pamphlets/maps, to linking their events and social media activity to the dedicated district calendar and social media accounts.

One of the benefits to the businesses and cultural organizations that we outlined includes being able to use the Nantucket Cultural District branding that the Steering Committee developed. This includes the both the name and logo, as well as any social media tags that the Steering Committee decides on in the future. We have also outlined the benefit that being a member will have your organization and events featured more heavily both on the website, as well as district social media. More outreach for these businesses in better, so these are the ultimate benefits that the district can directly offer its members.

Finding organizations/businesses to join would not be difficult, as our liaisons have a wide variety of contacts within the downtown community. The biggest challenge that the district could face in regards to this is reaching out to organizations is having them deny an invitation to join. Through this, they should begin to build themselves as a well-known entity within the downtown area.

2. The NCD Steering Committee should begin collecting data from businesses.

To do this, the NCD must create business partnerships that they then collect data from. In order to demonstrate the economic impacts of events and linkages in the district, the NCD should collect non-sensitive business sales data. Data collection should begin as soon as possible, as it gives more time for businesses and organizations to find time to compile and submit their data. By fulfilling this recommendation, the NCD will be able to develop a more comprehensive annual report for the MCC.

The NCD may face some challenges when they try to accomplish this goal. Some businesses may have questions and concerns about the anonymity and security of providing sensitive data. However, the system only asks for anonymous percentage changes in gross sales from businesses (through the Percentage Change Calculator), so those arguments can be addressed in a reasonable manner.

Other challenges may stem from the time involved with using the data collecting system on both the input (businesses) and output (analytics) sides. To resolve this issue, the NCD must reinforce to the member organizations that the data collection system is simple with a low time commitment to fill out. On the analytics side of the system, the NCD must be comfortable using the system. There are a few complex parts to the system that involve intermediate knowledge of the Google forms syntax. In order to make sure that the effectiveness of this system is not lost in any sort of complexity regarding how the system is programmed, we have done two things. The first was we held a training session with members of the Nantucket Arts Council (NAC), the Department of Culture and Tourism, and ReMain Nantucket before we left, the second was created an easy to use written guide that we left as a deliverable for a reference. With these two concerns addressed, any concerns about the system being too complex are essentially alleviated.

3. The NCD Steering Committee should adopt and update the new NCD website.

To do this, the Nantucket Cultural District Marketing Committee should designate someone specifically to update and adapt the website to changes over time. The NCD Marketing Committee and the Nantucket Arts Council; the NCD parent organization, should first link the website to their domain at “NantucketCulturalDistrict.org”. This should be completed as soon as possible so that the district and district events may receive a maximum amount of exposure before the spring shoulder season begins.

The website has many features that, within the scope of our project, we did not have time to explore. We recommend that the NCD Marketing Committee delve into the many possibilities that the website platform can offer. Some features of the website that may be useful in the future

are the ability to send email newsletters, collect donations, and post their annual reports publically.

One challenge the NCD Marketing Committee may face while working with the website is the familiarity of managing the website. Since many members of the committee are new to the website building software it may take time to get comfortable with making changes to content and formatting.

To overcome this challenge, we held a training session where we trained a few people involved in the District how to use and edit the website. Additionally, we left them with a detailed written guide on how to edit the different sections of the website. However, it is up to the members of the district to maintain the website so that it accurately represents changes in the district.

4. The NCD Steering Committee should expand their social media presence.

To do this, the NCD Marketing Committee should expand their current social media presence to include more platforms as well as post more frequently to increase outreach and public knowledge of the district and cultural events. The most important social media for the NCD to utilize is Facebook. We recommend the NCD additionally create profiles on Instagram and Twitter, but refrain from using YouTube, Reddit, Pinterest, or other social media sites as they are not suitable for the NCD's purposes. The use of social media will increase the knowledge and interest in the district as well as develop another platform for advertising.

This should be accomplished by the NCD Steering Committee, but more specifically their internal Marketing Committee, as soon as possible. The NCD should set reasonable goals for their social media outreach. For example, one goal they might have is planning to double their social media "likes" by the end of the current fiscal year (ending in June 2017), but that is ultimately up to the NCD Marketing Committee.

To accomplish this goal, the NCD Marketing Committee should increase the frequency of their posts on social media, such as their Facebook page. They can do this by increasing the number of original content as well as increasing the number posts that are shared from other cultural organizations. We identified a popular platform called [Hootsuite](#) as a potential tool for the NCD to utilize. Hootsuite allows for the easy management of multiple social media accounts at once, and features tools to automate posting, track audiences, and engage with visitors across all platforms.

One challenge the NCD Marketing Committee may face is the demographic gap between the cultural district event target age and the age of social media users. The NCD must reach the people on social media that will be interested in cultural events, and adapt their social media strategies accordingly.

5. The NCD Steering Committee should adopt a sustainable financial model.

To do this, the NCD Steering Committee should to adopt a financial model that is not entirely dependent on grants. The NCD currently utilizes a financial model based entirely on receiving grant funding from outside organizations such as ReMain Nantucket and the MCC. Relying on grant funding as an exclusive funding source is both unpredictable and unreliable, so they must decide on a funding model that can sustain them in the long run (Buchanan, 2013).

One challenge the NCD will face while trying to develop this financial model is the competition between themselves and the Chamber of Commerce, who offer a similar incentive to businesses. The Chamber of Commerce provides advertising for businesses on the island in return for a yearly membership fee. This means that the NCD must avoid imposing a membership fee on businesses to avoid competition, but still create a form of revenue to sustain itself and its expenses.

This recommendation will be considered fulfilled when the NCD has a reliable source of revenue that does not rely on grants and that won't compete with the Chamber of Commerce programs. This should be completed as soon as possible to ensure the sustainability of the district and its programming.

6. The NCD Steering Committee should track additional metrics in the future.

To do this, the NCD Steering Committee should commit to tracking additional metrics using our data collection tool. Even if the Nantucket Cultural District changes its current financial model, data collection will still be important in district planning. The NCD Steering Committee will most likely continue to seek out grants as an additional source of funding, so having a large quantity of data on the cultural district is important. To assist the Steering Committee choose which metrics they would like to track, we have created a list of suggested potential metrics from a variety of sources (other districts, grant-giving organization, etc.) to give them a foundation for what metrics they should look into tracking next (Appendix B).

It is up to the NCD Steering Committee to determine which metrics they see as important to track. We have given them the data collection tool, which can be modified to collect and compile more types of data. Again, this recommendation should be completed as soon as possible in order to compile a backlog of useful amount of data, should a grant or program arise that requires a specific data set.

7: CONCLUSION & FUTURE WORK

The recommendations section explained what we believe the next steps are for the Nantucket Cultural District. They are organized in order of importance and start with approaching and expanding members of the district. We then endorse the use of our data collection system to collect economic impact data from businesses. Next, we believe the NCD should use social media and its new website to reach out to residents and tourists to educate them about the district and create interest in events in the shoulder seasons. Lastly, we recommend that the NCD adopt a sustainable financial model that is independent of grants and expand upon its data tracking to other metrics.

From our findings, we have identified a project for future WPI students to possibly pursue in the future. We identified that there was a need to analyze public parking policies and availability during the shoulder and off-seasons. A few of our interviews found that parking restrictions and ticketing regulations are two factors that keep year-round residents away from the downtown area during the off-season. To do this, we suggest that a future WPI project team interview members of the community from many different demographic groups as well as policy makers and enforcers in town. This will give the team a clear perspective of the challenges that the town faces when trying to improve user experience downtown. A desirable outcome of such a project would be either the recommendation to change the public parking policies to better accommodate residents or improve public parking availability, and how to do so. We believe this project to be useful to the town to increase residential visitation during the shoulder and off-season.

7.1 Reflection

The Nantucket Cultural District Steering Committee and the Executive Steering Committee have been extremely helpful in the completion of this project. Without the cooperation and time dedicated to us by these members, our project would not have been a success. We appreciate everything that the community and the NCD has taught us about working in the real world, including the many unexpected challenges that come with it. Our team has gained experience working with professionals, engaging members of the public, building useful graphical representations, and developing website platforms.

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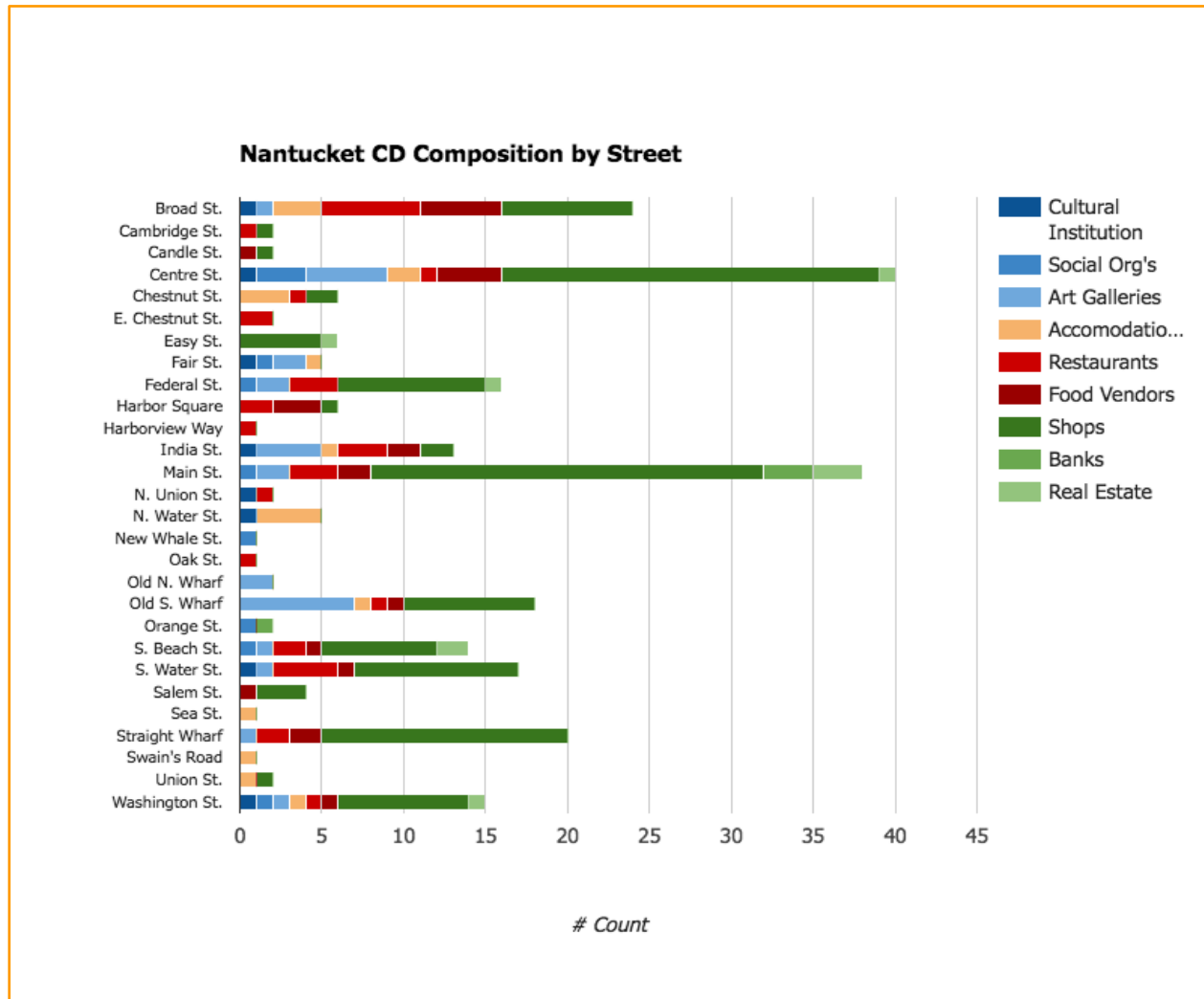
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APPENDIX A: DISTRICT MEMBER INFORMATION

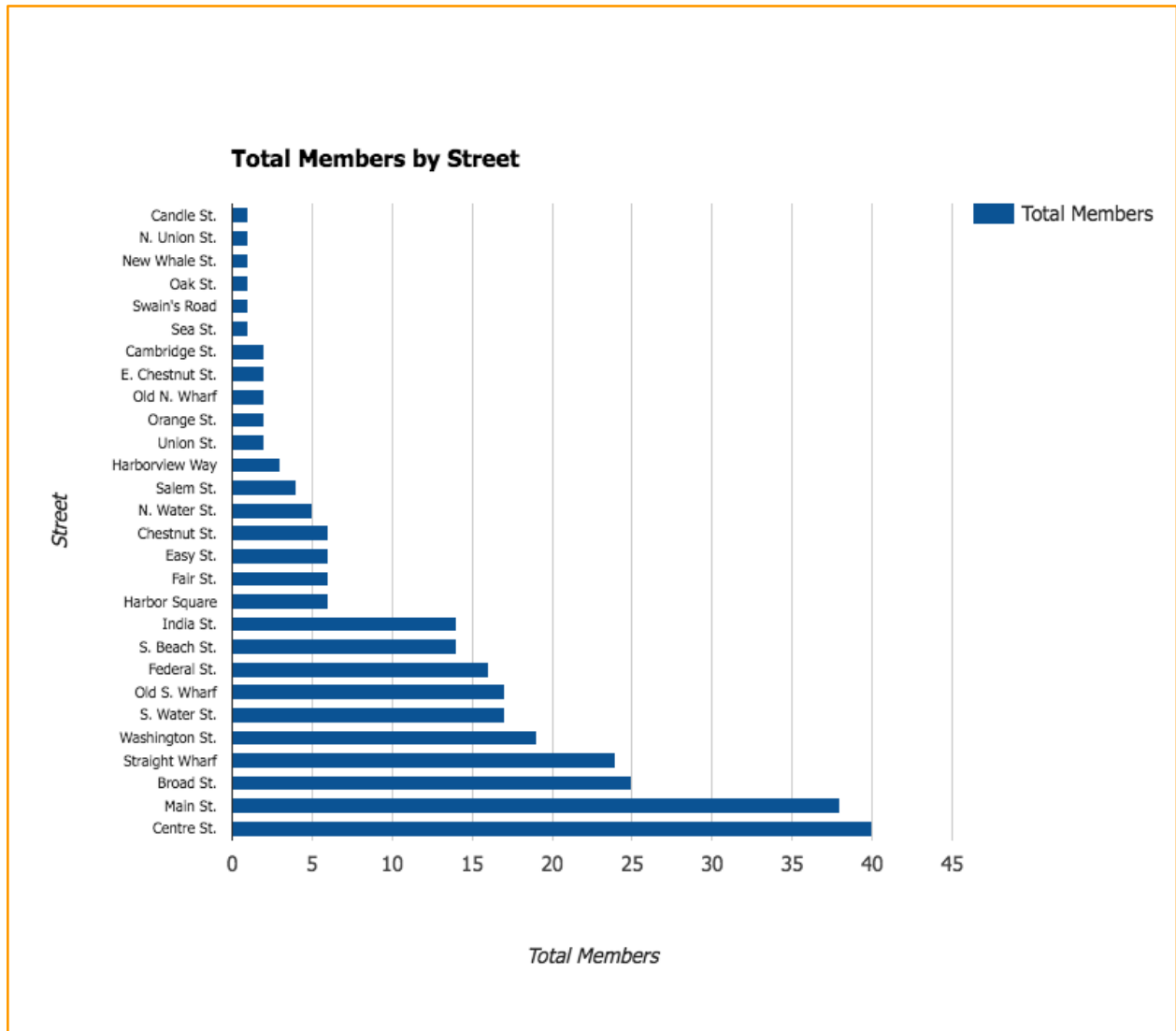
This section shows the different compositions of the Nantucket Cultural District, the first one being by type of organization by street, the second showing the number of members by street sorted from least to most.

Item 1: Nantucket Cultural District Composition by Street



(Rondeau, 2016)

Item 2: Total Members of the Nantucket Cultural District by Street Name



(Rondeau, 2016)

APPENDIX B: LIST OF METRICS

This appendix contains a list of the different metrics we found as being potentially useful to the Nantucket Cultural District to look into using in the future. The metrics table starts with the required MCC metrics, the NCD suggested metrics, and then lists metrics that other organizations track. It is split across two pages for organizational and ease-of-viewing's sake.

Item 1: List of Potential Metrics

Metric:	Adapted From:
Tracking Visitor Attendance	MCC Requirements
Changes in Building Occupancy Rates	MCC Requirements
Changes in meals and lodging tax	MCC Requirements
Economic Impacts of Cultural District Events	Sponsor-Suggested Metric
Knowledge of the Cultural District	Sponsor-Suggested Metric
Popular tourist activities	Barnstable Village Cultural District
Venues Available for Local Artists	Barnstable Village Cultural District & National Endowment for the Arts
Tourists Spending in the District	Barnstable Village Cultural District
Numbers of Empty Storefronts	Barnstable Village Cultural District
Empty Spaces that Cultural Institutions are Moving Into	Barnstable Village Cultural District
Internet/Social Media Presence (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Website Traffic, etc.)	Springfield Central Cultural District
Changes in Grant Revenue	Springfield Central Cultural District & National Endowment for the Arts
Changes in District Membership	Springfield Central Cultural District & Americans for the Arts
Amount of & Types of Major Cultural District events.	Required in MD, KY
Numbers & Types of Partnerships at the Local Level	Required in MD, KY
Registration Numbers for Cultural District Events	Salisbury Cultural District

Item 2: List of Potential Metrics (Continued)

Metric:	Adapted From:
Revenue in Restaurants, Hotels, Retail, and Galleries	National Endowment for the Arts & Americans for the Arts
Tax Revenue and Property Values	National Endowment for the Arts & Americans for the Arts
Charitable Assets	National Endowment for the Arts
Community Assets	National Endowment for the Arts
Number of Events and Attendance	National Endowment for the Arts & Americans for the Arts
Number of Volunteers and Volunteering Organizations	National Endowment for the Arts
Number of Trusted Role Models	National Endowment for the Arts
Measures of Innovation (Patents Granted, new Businesses)	National Endowment for the Arts
Jobs Created/Retained	National Endowment for the Arts & Americans for the Arts
Demographics of Home-Buyers	National Endowment for the Arts
Residential Vacancies	National Endowment for the Arts
Change in Consumption	National Endowment for the Arts
Number of Visitors	Americans for the Arts
Value of Historic Preservation Tax Credits	Americans for the Arts
Partnerships between Businesses (Linkages)	Nantucket Cultural District

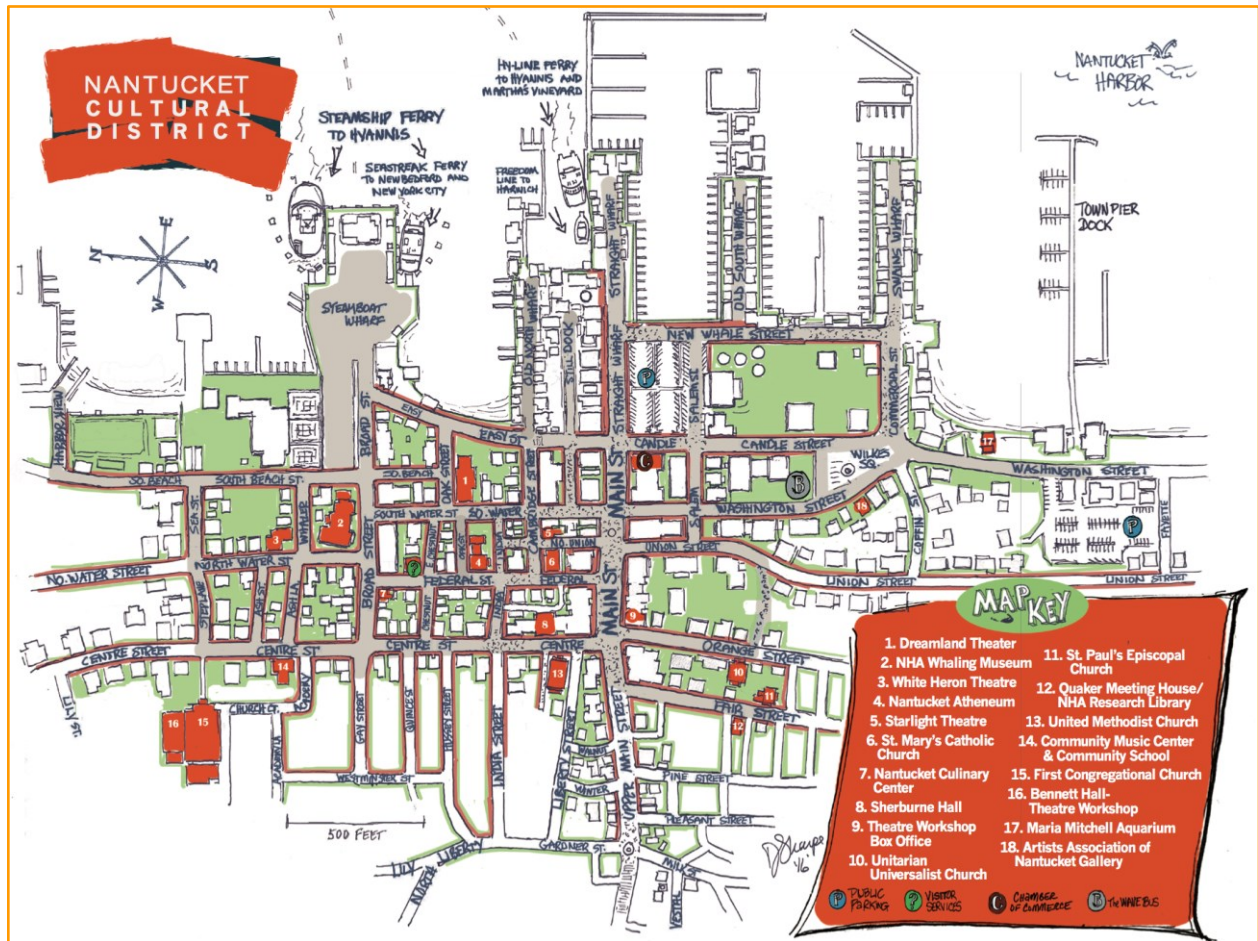
APPENDIX C: TOURIST BROCHURE

This section contains the currently used Cultural District brochure. This is currently in print and exists at member organizations within the district, including the Chamber of Commerce and the Visitor Center. The front lists events, showcases pictures, and gives sources of more information to those who read it. The back is the district map which shows the locations of the member organizations located within the district.

Item 1: Front of Brochure



Item 2: Back of Brochure (District Map)



(Murphy, Schulte, & Gonzales (2016, September). Personal Communication).

APPENDIX D: CALENDAR OF 2016 ANNUAL EVENTS

This appendix contains a list, created by the Chamber of Commerce, of annual events that bring large amounts of people to the island.

2016 Annual Events
April 29-May 1, Daffodil Festival
May 18-22, Wine Festival
June, Nantucket Preservation Month
June 17-19, Book Festival
June 18-23, Dance Festival
June 22-27, Film Festival
July 3 - Independence Day Fireworks
July 4 - Independence Day Downtown Celebration
July 13-16, Comedy Festival
August 13, Boston Pops
Oct. 8, Cranberry Festival
Dec. 2-4, Stroll Weekend

(Murphy, Schulte, & Gonzales (2016, September). Personal Communication).

APPENDIX E: SURVEY QUESTIONS; TOURISTS / RESIDENTS, &

This is a sample from the list of questions that we asked residents, cultural organizations and businesses during the interview process. Other questions were asked, but this set of questions was deemed as the most important.

Survey Questions	
<i>Residents</i>	<i>Businesses/Organizations</i>
Do you know what a Cultural District is?	
Did you know that Nantucket had a Cultural District?	
Did you come to downtown for a specific event?	
Have you been or do you plan on visiting a museum, art gallery, or church / religious institution? How did you hear about said institutions?	Do you think there are advantages to collaborating with other organizations or businesses?
What do you know about the Nantucket Cultural District?	What type of information/data have you collected?
Are you more likely to go downtown if there is a large cultural event taking place?	Do you think the cultural district affects your business? How?
What software do you utilize to track your business data? (e.g. Intuit, Quicken, Access ...)	Are you a member of the Nantucket Cultural District? If no, would you be interested in becoming a member of the Nantucket Cultural District?
What is the last Cultural Event that you went into to town for?	Would you be willing to share some of your economic data so we could cross reference it with cultural district events?

APPENDIX F: CULTURAL DISTRICT MAPS

This Appendix contains maps of various cultural districts including the Nantucket Cultural District.

Item 1: The Nantucket Cultural District

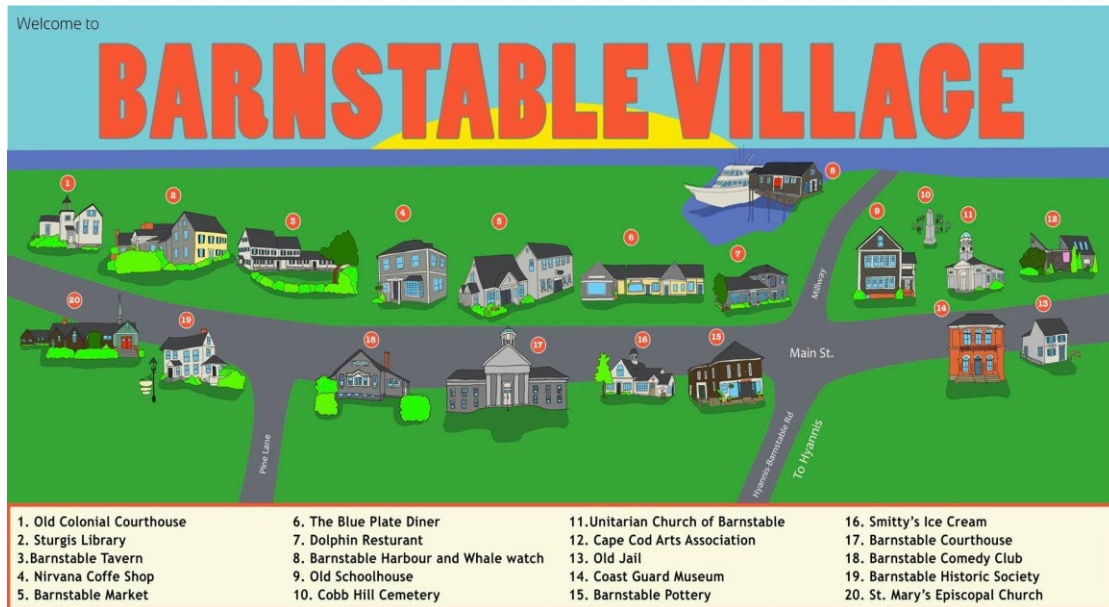


(Murphy, Schulte, & Gonzales (2016, September). Personal Communication).

Item 2: The Garden District Tucson, AZ

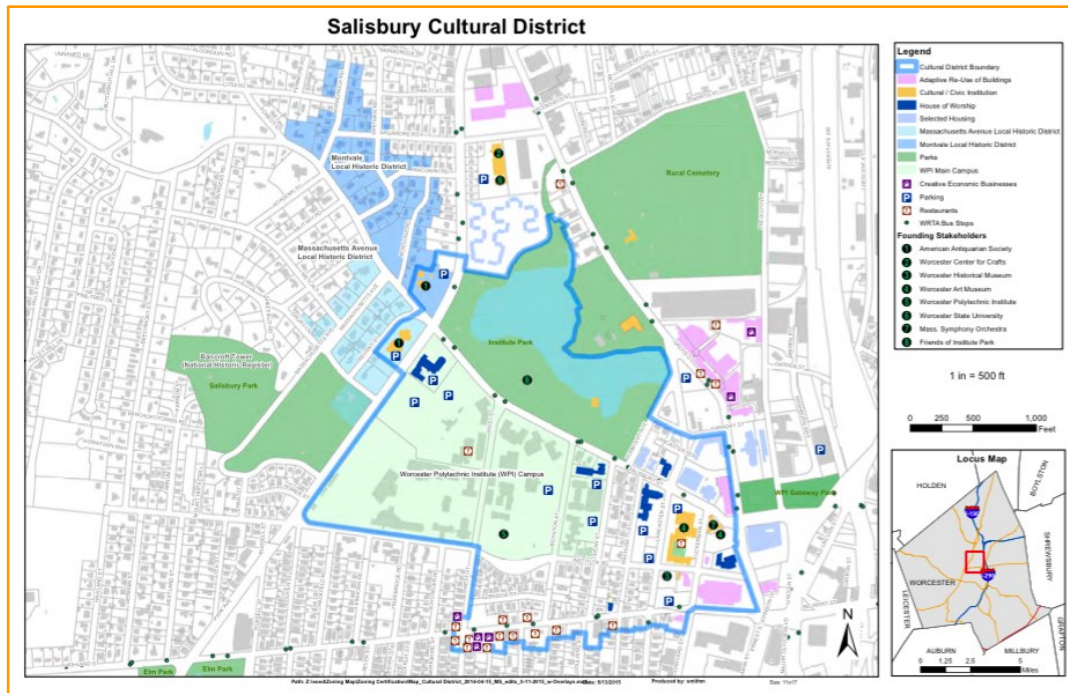


Item 3: The Barnstable Village Cultural District



(Barnstable Village Cultural District Facebook Page, 2016)

Item 4: The Salisbury Cultural District Worcester, MA



(Loof, 2016, October 6. Personal Communication).

Item 5: The Springfield Downtown Cultural



(Springfield Downtown, n.d.)

APPENDIX G: Verbal Informed Consent

This appendix contains the verbal consent template for our interviews.

Verbal Consent for Issuing Surveys or Interviews:

Spoken in a friendly, approachable manner:

“[Greetings] We are a project team from Worcester Polytechnic Institute here in Massachusetts. We’re working in conjunction with the newly formed Nantucket Cultural District to assist them in collecting data about a few different aspects of the district. To obtain different opinions regarding these aspects, we would like to ask you a few relevant questions. Your participation in this survey/interview is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Your responses will be recorded anonymously, no names or identifying information will appear in any of our project reports or publications. It is important to us that you fully understand your rights throughout this process and if you have any questions about this, please let us know.”

Although we do not currently intend to, if we wish to take any photographs or videos for our project, we will refer to the protocol developed by the 2014 Cape Town Project Center Standards.

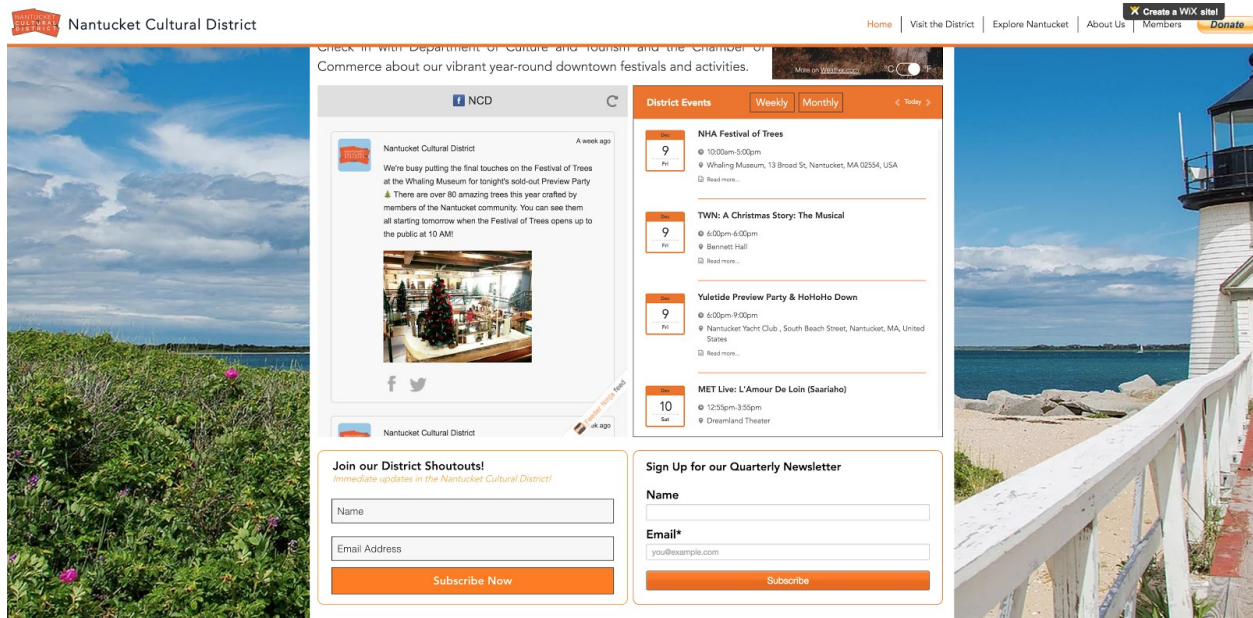
APPENDIX H: WEBSITE

This appendix contains screenshots of the different pages on our website, found at “<https://teamncd.wixsite.com/ackncd>”. It will be updated to “<https://nantucketculturaldistrict.org>” when the Nantucket Arts Council oversees our website in the future.

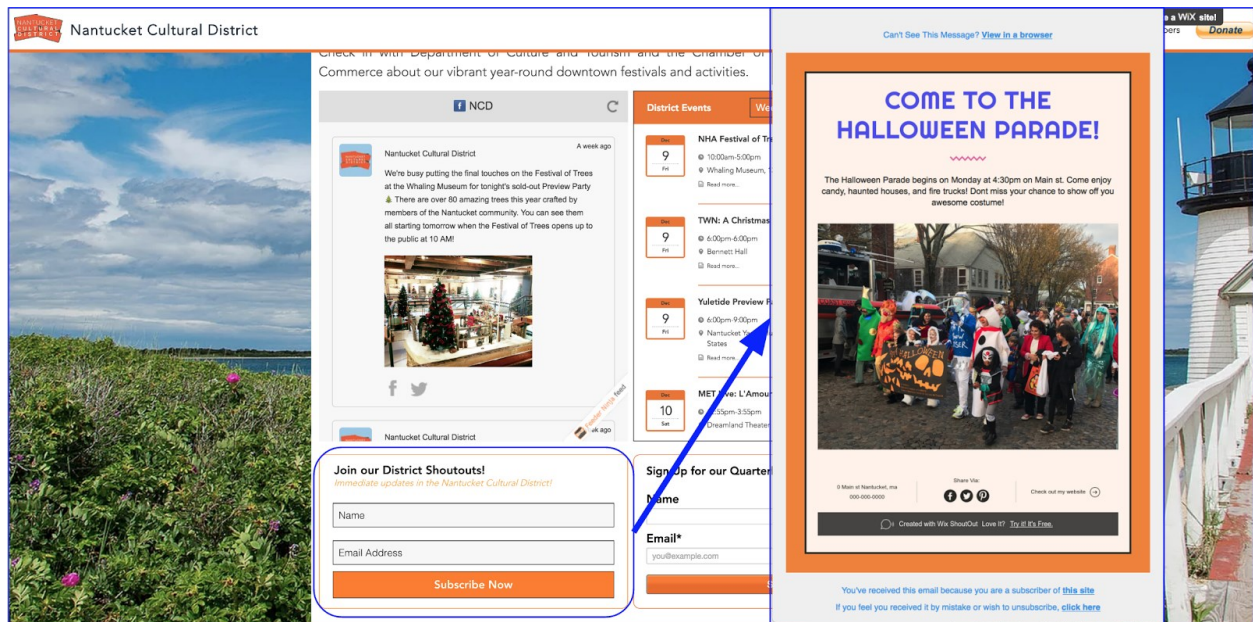
Item 1: Home



Item 1.1: Social Media



Item 1.2: ShoutOuts



Create a WIX site!

Nantucket Cultural District

Home | Visit the District | Explore Nantucket | About Us | Members | Donate

Nantucket Cultural District

District Events

See what is happening in the district with our calendar. A month at a time.

Weekly List Home

< December 16 >

Tue
Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

Whaling Museum, 13 Broad St., Nantucket, MA 02554, USA

The Festival of Trees is the NMH's holiday tradition that begins during Nantucket's Groll weekend and transforms the Whaling Museum into a festive winter wonderland for the entire month of December. This event features community crafted trees designed by local merchants, nonprofit organizations, artists and children.
Admission: NMH Members Free, Children under 6 Free, Nantucket Year-round Residents (adult \$2-\$5, Youth Ages 6-17 \$5, Seniors/Students \$15), General Admission \$20.
www.ntha.org

Festival of Trees
• Christmas Story
• Previews Party &
• MET Live! L'Amour De La


Nantucket Cultural District

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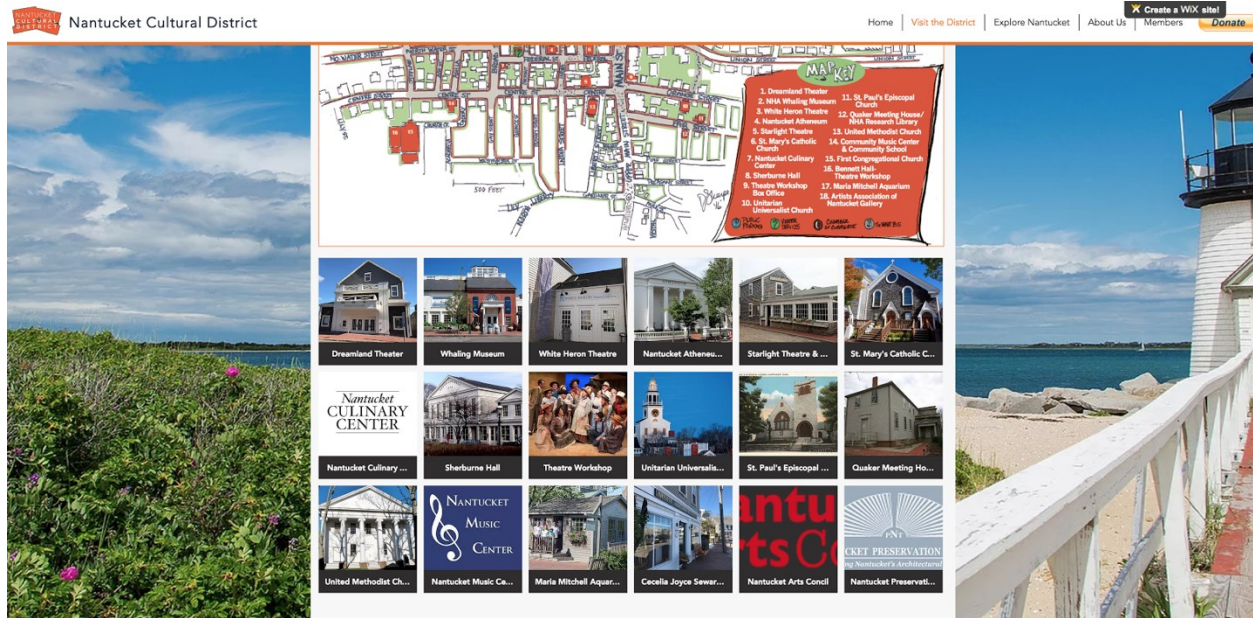
Visit the District

Check out the District Calendar and our Newsletter above to see what is happening in the district. Below is the Nantucket Cultural District map including the district's highlighted organizations.

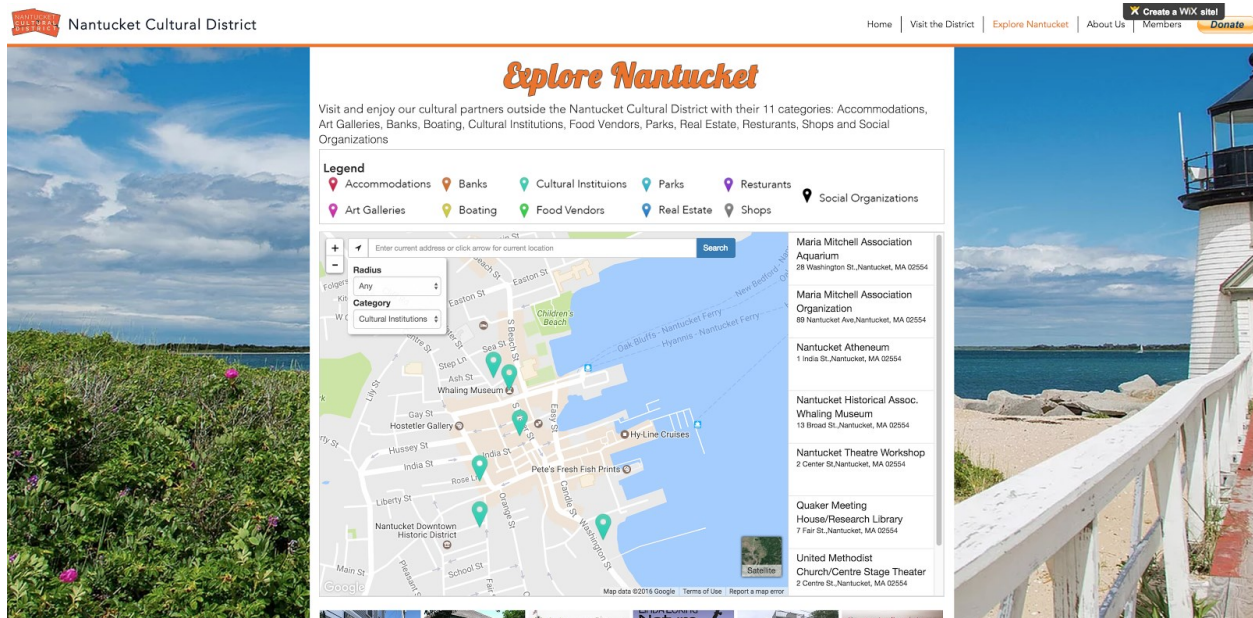





Item 2.1: Cultural Organizations of the District




Item 3: Explore Nantucket



Item 4: About Us

 Nantucket Cultural District

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About Us


What is a Cultural District?
A thriving creative sector is usually among a community's most powerful economic development assets and one that contributes greatly to the overall well being of residents and visitors alike. Cultural districts help local arts, humanities, and science organizations improve the quality and range of their public programs so that more local families can benefit from them. They enhance the experience for visitors and thus attract more tourists and tax revenue. And they attract artists, cultural organizations, and entrepreneurs of all kinds, which often enhances property values and makes communities more attractive.

Nantucket Cultural District
Here on Nantucket, our process began and continues as an initiative through a combination of Town of Nantucket, our island's arts and cultural organizations, and leaders from the downtown business community.


Whether you love nature, history, or the arts, Nantucket offers each in abundance. Encompassing the island's downtown core, the Nantucket Cultural District embraces the heart of the island's wealth of arts and culture. Visitors especially like going back in time on Nantucket, with its cobblestone streets, historic public buildings, well-preserved homes, and hidden pathways. Strolling around the 28 blocks of Nantucket Cultural District, visitors encounter hundreds of houses and landmarks on the National Register of Historic Places and landmarks that are part of the National Historic Landmark district, sites that chronicle our nation's past in this present-day setting. A busy waterfront, which abuts the district, welcomes visitors daily via public boat transportation and is home to a world-class marina and scenic harbor, where international sailing and power vessels lay anchor alongside sport fishing boats and traditional scallopers. A short walk away takes strollers to stunning public beaches. Little wonder that many movies and books have made the island central to their stories.

Nantucket Island is in its early stages of the development of a Cultural District with the inclusion of the designation of the area, potential collaborators/partnerships, sanction through the Town of Nantucket's Board of Selectmen and the ultimate approval by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. During this process, a marketing strategy and plan is being developed to include three stages of short term, midterm and long range implementation plans. The following is a condensed version of these three strategies and their execution. See our Annual Reports submitted to the Massachusetts Cultural Council.


Our Mission:
To underscore the importance of arts and culture to our health and happiness and to local businesses while improving the enjoyment of arts and culture locally for residents and visitors alike.



Item 4.1: Mission, Goal, MCC, Steering Committee Members

 Nantucket Cultural District

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Our Mission:
To underscore the importance of arts and culture to our health and happiness and to local businesses while improving the enjoyment of arts and culture locally for residents and visitors alike.

Our Goals:


1. Increase visitor and resident participation in cultural activities through programming, education and community engagement.
2. Establish and expand collaborations among businesses and cultural institutions.
3. Boost economic benefits for our cultural institutions and local businesses year round.
4. Provide an inclusive experience of cultural and historic Nantucket.

Learn more about the island at the Nantucket's Official Website.


Massachusetts Cultural Council
In recognition of the importance of arts and culture, an act of the Massachusetts state legislature in 2010 created a process to designate local "cultural districts" throughout our commonwealth. With applications initiated by local communities, these areas are reviewed and determined under guidelines of the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Among the current 32 designated Cultural Districts in Massachusetts are the Village Cultural District and HyArts Cultural District in Barnstable; Beverly Arts District; Rocky Neck Cultural District in Gloucester; Newburyport Cultural District; Glass Town Cultural District in Sandwich; Vineyard Haven Harbor Cultural District and others including several in Boston. Many other Massachusetts towns have launched applications for the designation.

Steering Committee

Melissa Murphy <i>Co-Chair</i> Department of Culture and Tourism	Molly Anderson <i>Member</i> Nantucket Athenaeum
Janet Schulte <i>Co-Chair</i> Nantucket Island Chamber of Commerce	Michael May <i>Member</i> Nantucket Preservation Trust




Item 4.2: Contact Us


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ReMain Nantucket

Barbara Elder
Member
Nantucket Arts Council


Nantucket Lightship Basket Museum

David Gagnon
Member
Maria Mitchell Association

Justin Cerne
Member
Theatre Workshop of Nantucket

Contact Us

Questions?
Feel free to reach out to the Nantucket Arts Council, Chamber of Commerce, and the Department of Culture and Tourism for more information.



Name
 Email

Subject

Phone


Message

Send




5 North Water Street,
Nantucket, MA 02554

P.O. Box 2176
Nantucket, MA 02584


Phone: 508-325-8588
info@nantucketartscouncil.org



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Item 5: Members


Nantucket Cultural District

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Hello [ack16ncd@gmail...](#)
[Log out](#)

Welcome Members

Forum
Collaborate with other Nantucket Cultural District Organizations!

[Click Here](#)

Submit your Event
Submit your Event to the Nantucket Cultural District Calendar!

[Click Here](#)

Percent Calculator
Percent Calculator will help with submitting your data.

[Download](#)

Business Event Sales Data
Submit your Business events sales data to the Nantucket Cultural District!

[Click Here](#)

Cultural Org. Attendance
Track your attendance and submit it to the Nantucket Cultural District!

[Click Here](#)


Linkages
Submit your Linkage data to the Nantucket Cultural District!

[Click Here](#)

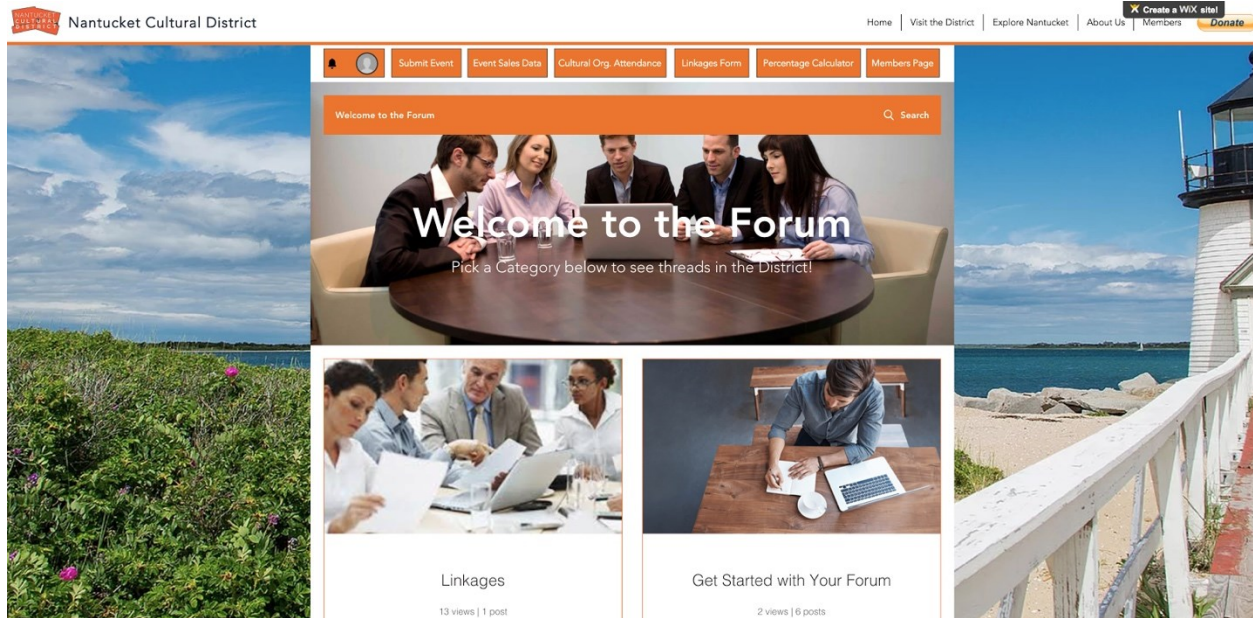
[Weekly](#) [List](#)

< December 2016 >

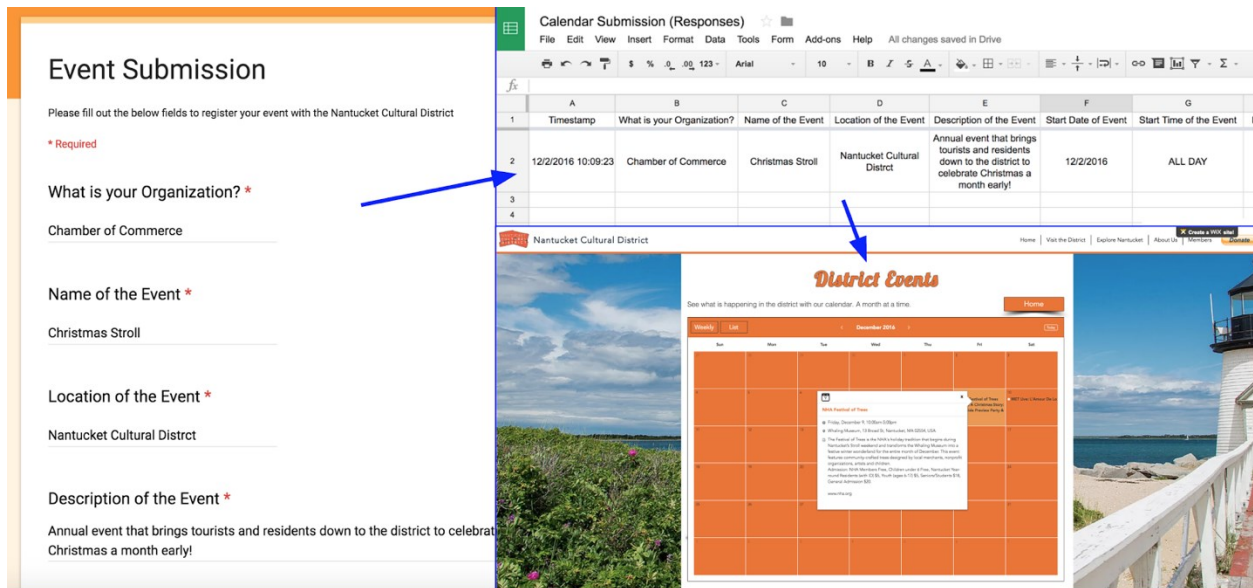
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			Lecture Aurora Zwickl		Book Festival of Trees TWIN A Christmas Story Valentine Preview Party &	MET Live: L'Amour De La



Item 5.1: Forum



Item 5.2: Submit your Calendar Event



Item 5.3: Member Forms

What is the Name of Your Organization? *

Your answer

What year does your event take place? *

Please only input whole number year

Your answer

What is the date of your event? *

MM DD YYYY

__ / __ / 2016

What season is your event held in? *

☐ On-Season

☐ Off-Season

☐ Shoulder-Season

What is the name of your event? *

Your answer

What is the name of your business? *

Please list the name of your business.

Applebees

What type of organization do you operate? *

Restaurant

Is your Business a Non-Profit? *

☐ Yes

☒ No

What date are you submitting this form? *

If event or linkage was offered on behalf of the organization, please list the date.

MM DD YYYY

12 / 06 / 2016

Which event are you submitting this form for? *

Christmas Stroll

NEXT

What is the Name of your business? *

Your answer

What type of business or organization do you operate? *

Choose

What is the name of your linkage? *

Your answer

What was the date of your linkage? *

MM DD YYYY

__ / __ / 2016

What season is your linkage in? *

☐ On-Season

☐ Off-Season

☐ Shoulder-Season

What type of business did you partner with? *

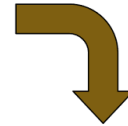
Choose

Item 5.4: Percent Change Calculator

First, Input the date of the event into the orange boxes below	
	Date of Event
Month (mm)	
Day (dd)	
Year (yyyy)	



Second, Input your actual data into one of the rows below, for the dates requested.			
Date	date 1	date 2	date 3
Gross Sales	\$\$	\$\$	\$\$
# of Customers	##	##	##
Other Metric			

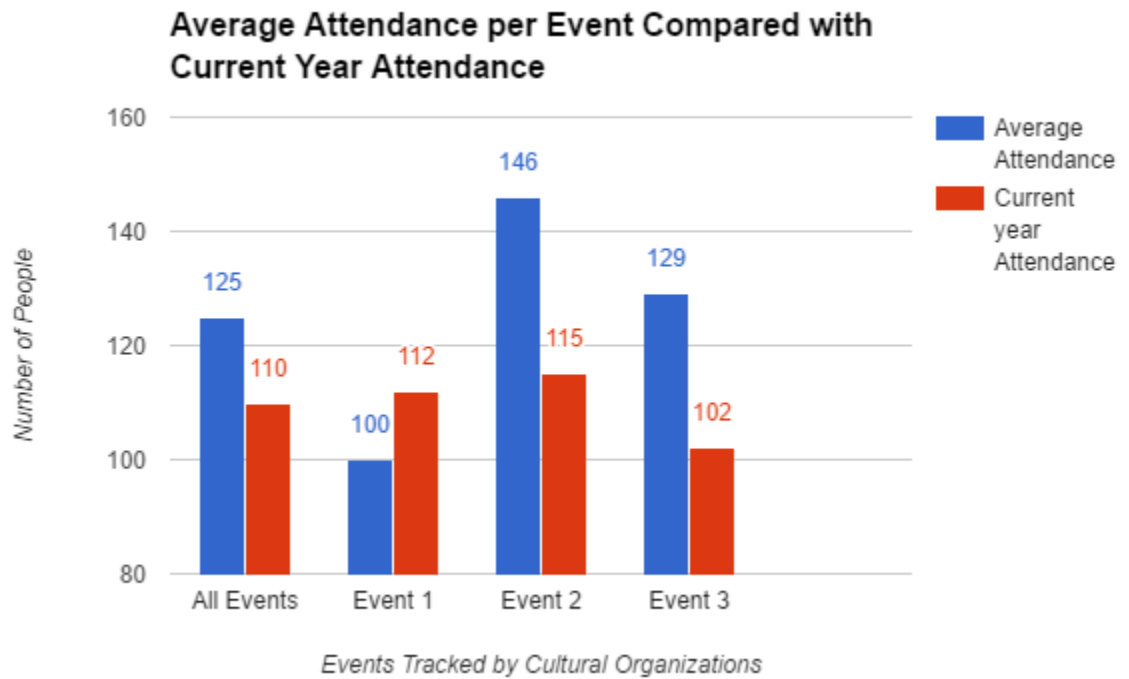


Lastly, For whichever row you inputted data into take the percentages from below and input those directly into the Data Collection Form		
Percent change	7 days prior compared with event	Event compared with 7 days after
Gross Sales	%%	%%
# of Customers	%%	%%
Other Metric		

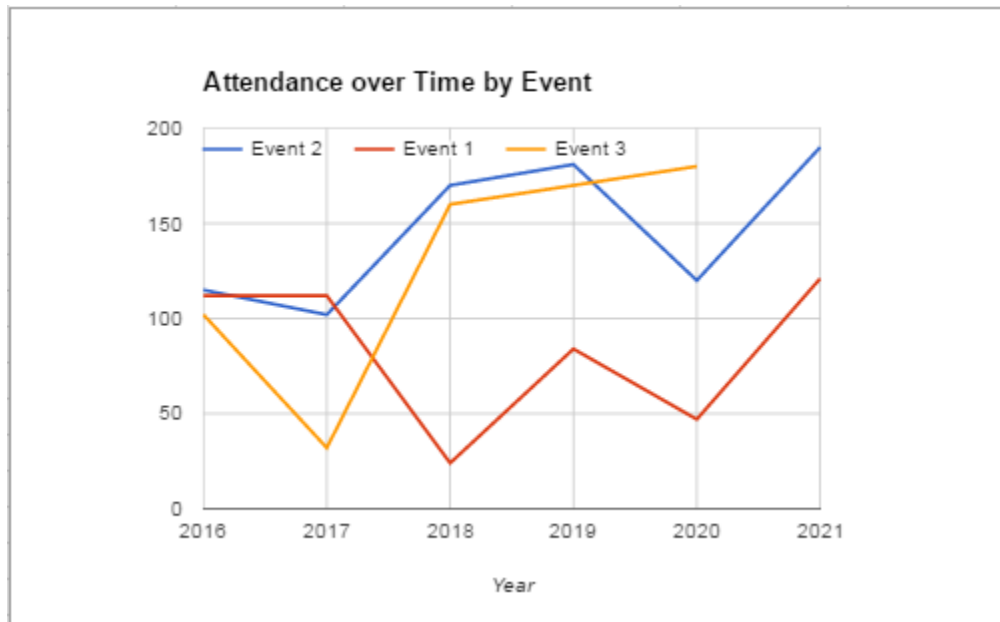
APPENDIX I: DATA COLLECTION TOOL

This Appendix contains screenshots of our data collection tool and our data analysis tool displaying graphs of fake data. These graphs were made for proof of concept purposes to show the capabilities of the data analysis tool and to show what graphs will be automatically created once real data is input into the tool.

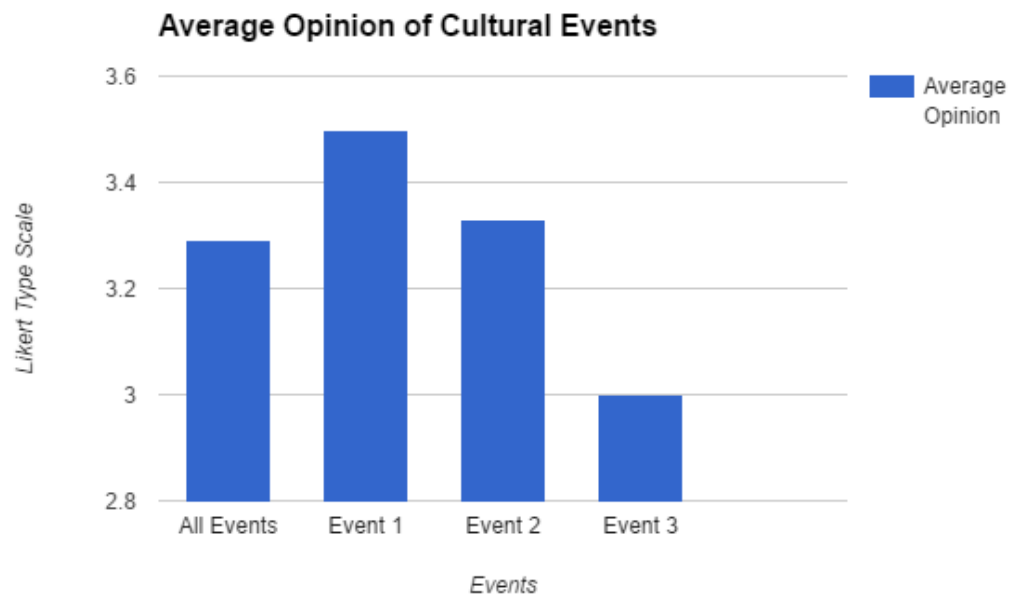
Item 1: Average Attendance per event



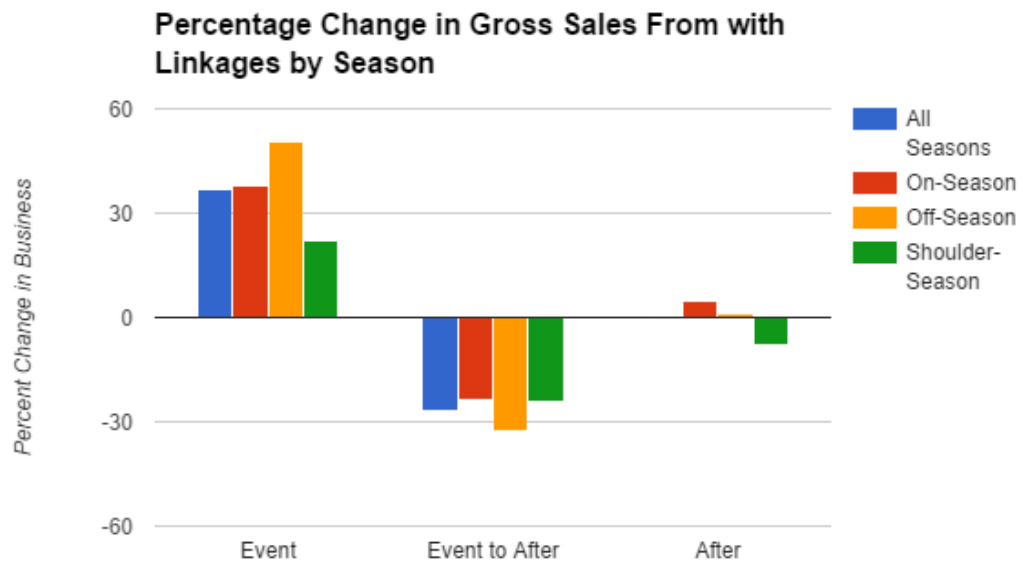
Item 2: Attendance over Time by Event



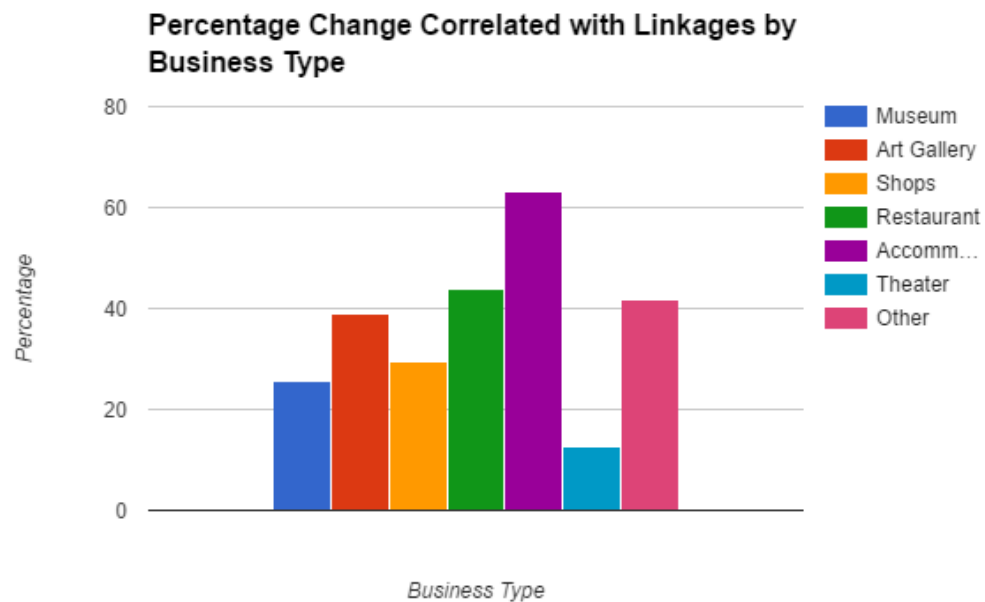
Item 3: Average Opinion of Cultural Events by Event



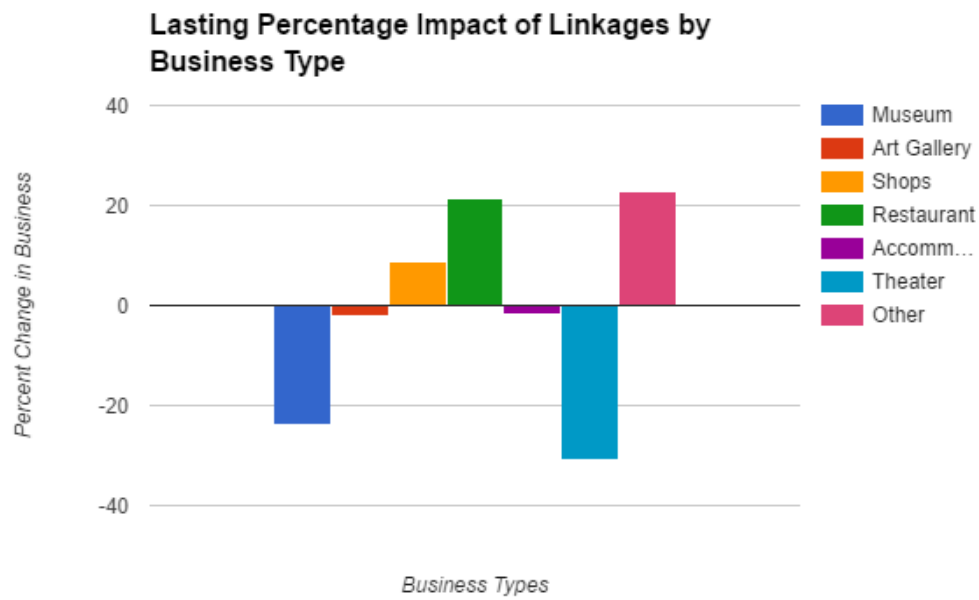
Item 4: Percentage Change Correlated with Linkages by Season



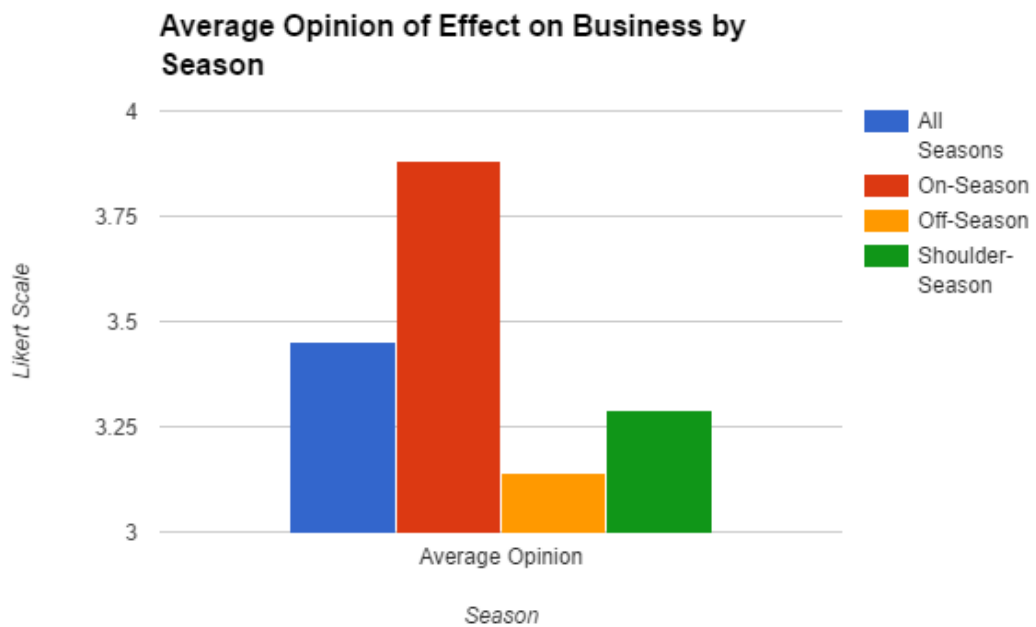
Item 5: Percentage Change Correlated with linkages by Business Type



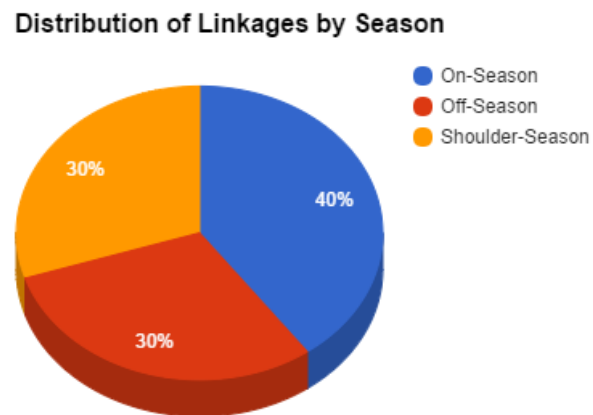
Item 6: Lasting Percentage impact of Linkages by Business Type



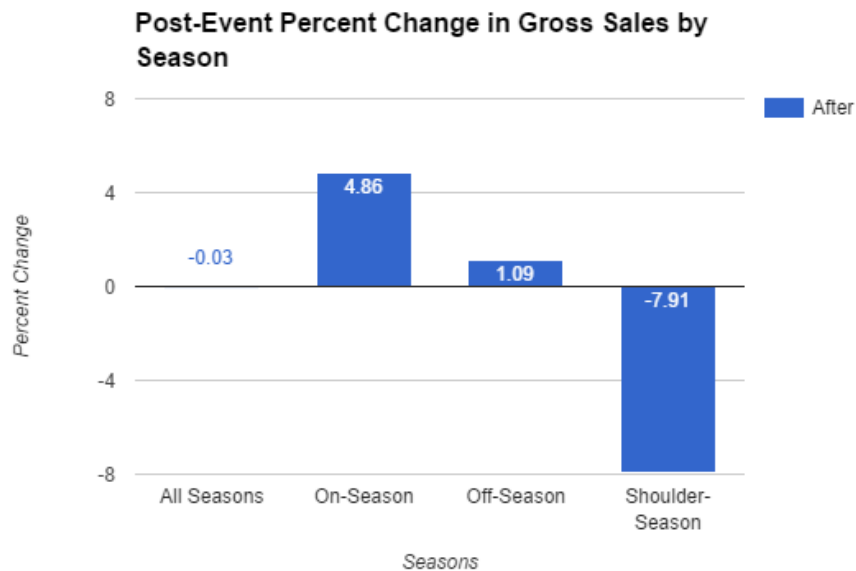
Item 7: Average Opinion of Linkages Effect on Business by Season



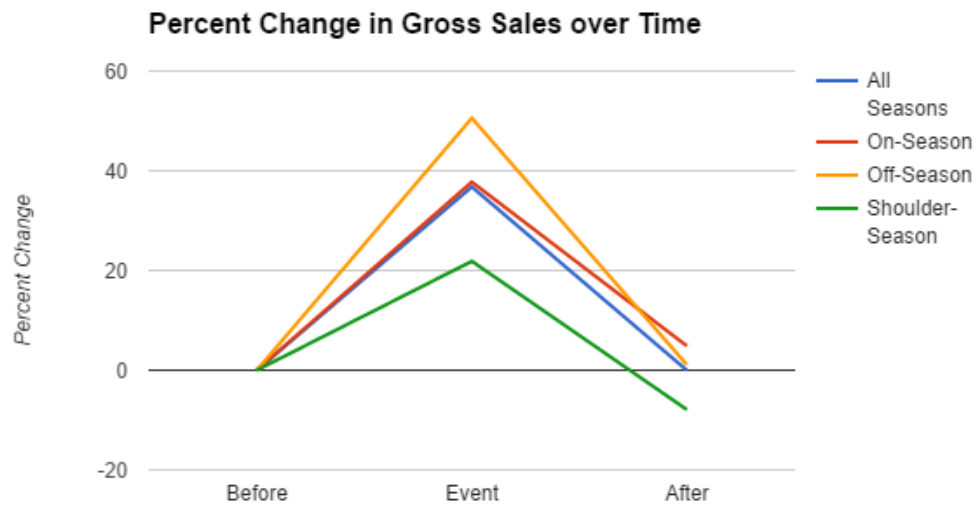
Item 8: Distribution of Linkages by Season



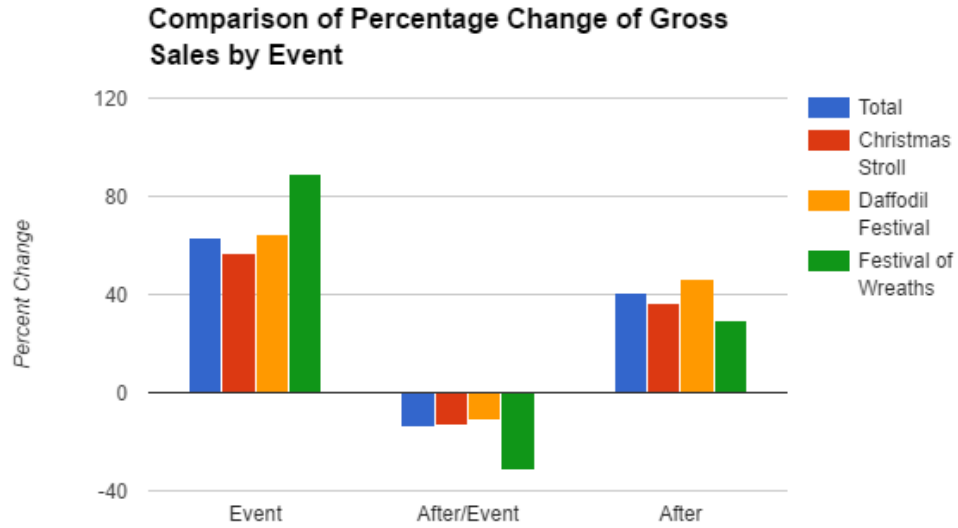
Item 9: Post-Event Percent Change in Gross Sales by Season of Linkages



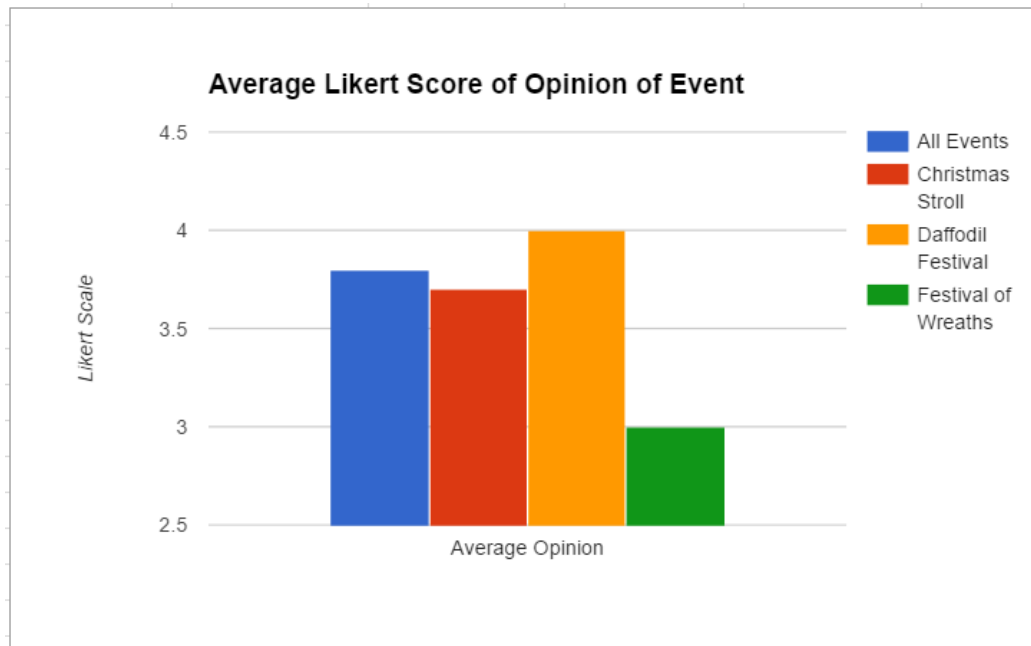
Item 10: Percent Change in Gross Sales caused by Linkages Over Time



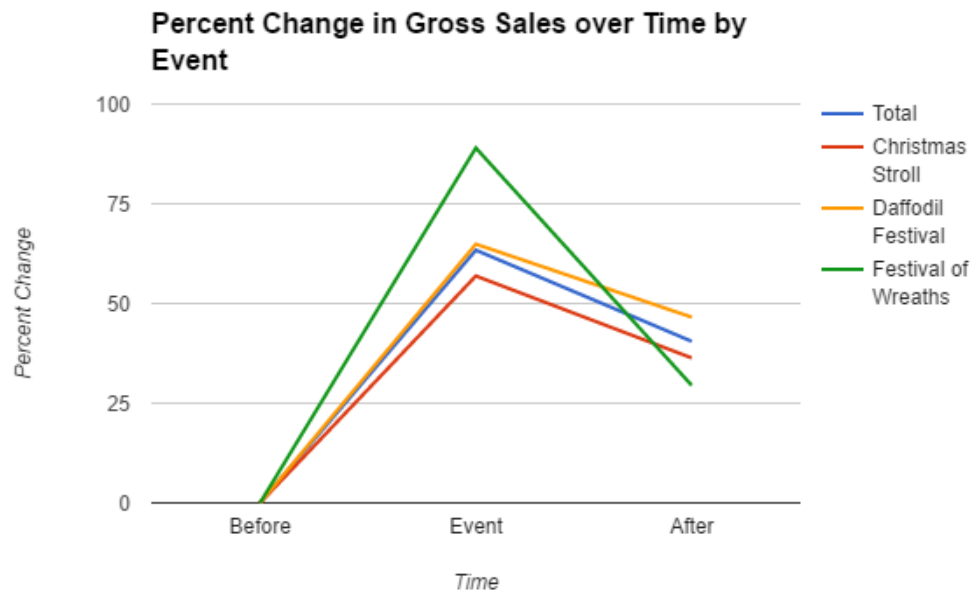
Item 11: Comparison of Percentage Change in Gross Sales by Event



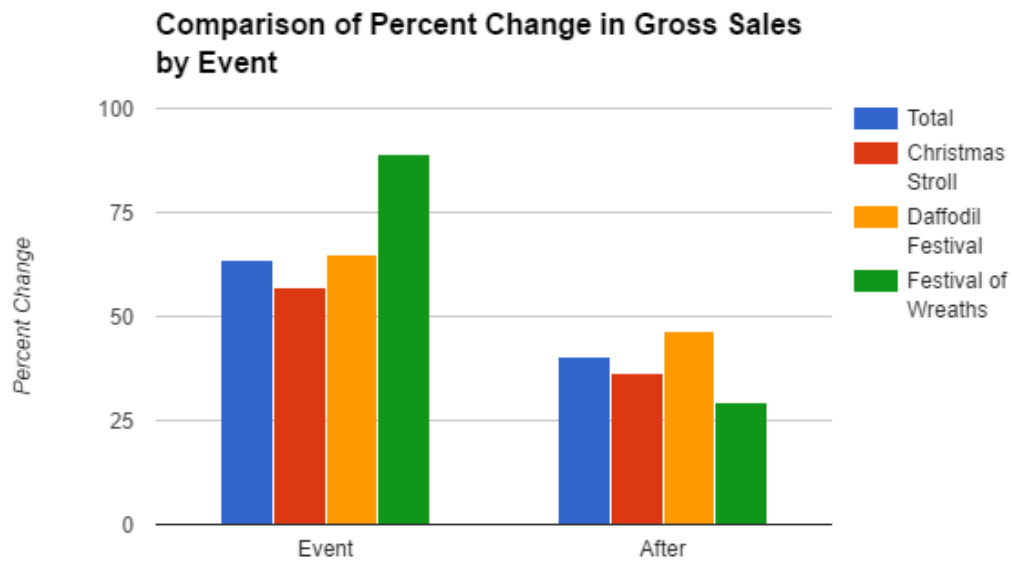
Item 12: Average Likert Score of Opinion of Event



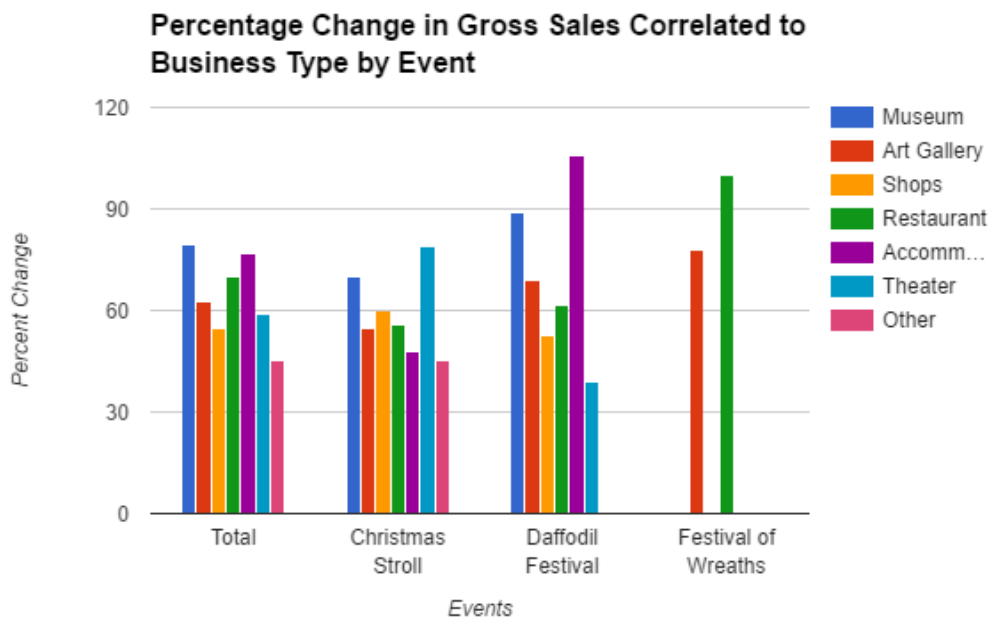
Item 13: Percent Change in Gross Sales over Time by Event



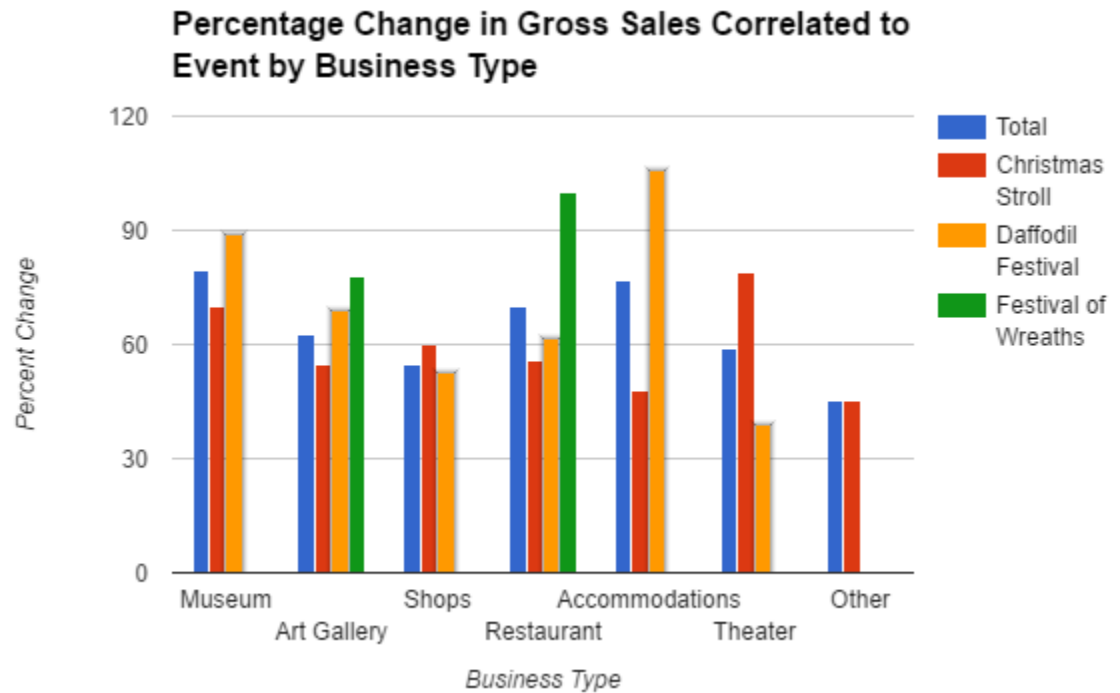
Item 14: Comparison of Percent Change in Gross Sales by Event



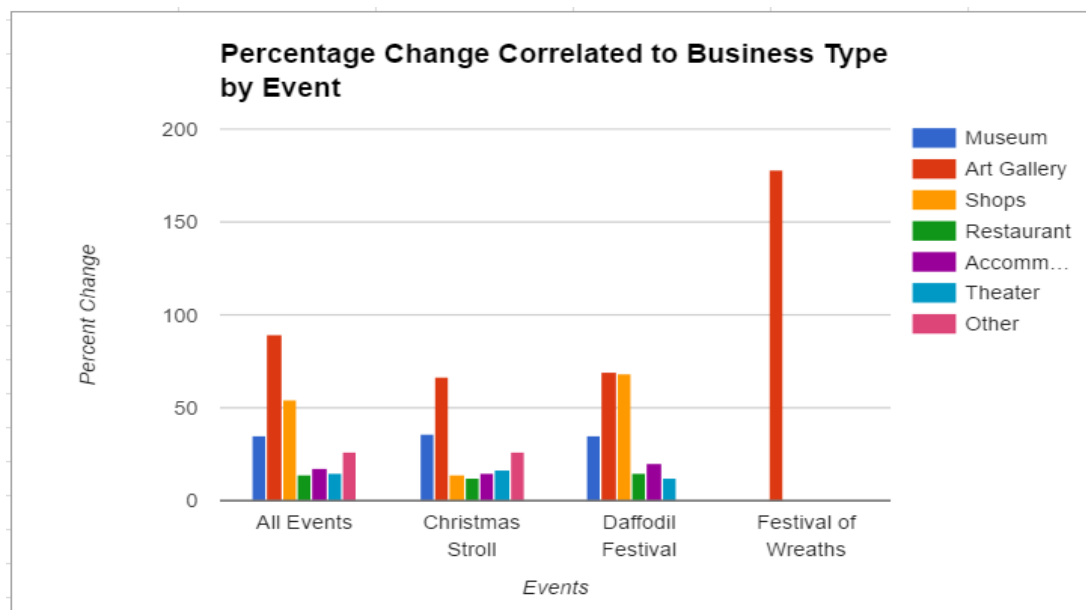
Item 15: Percentage Change Correlated to business Type by Event



Item 16: Percentage Change Correlated to Event by Business Type



Item 17: Percentage Change Correlated to Business type by Event



Item 18: Percentage Change Correlated to Event by Business Type

