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From the Boston Business Journal:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/boston/news/2020/01/10/top-mass-caterers-gain-revenue-despite-crowded.html>

LIST PLUS

Top Mass. caterers gain revenue despite crowded field

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Here's some food for thought regarding the Business Journal's ranking of the largest caterers in Massachusetts: The list is a bit smaller this year — 20 firms appear versus 22 in 2019's list — but more than half of those surveyed saw revenue growth.

In all, the majority of the 18 firms that appeared on last year's and this year's lists — 12 total — reported year-over-year gains in revenue generated from events catered in the Bay State in 2019. Five others saw their revenues decrease, while one more stayed flat.

Among the firms that declined or did not respond to survey requests were: Gourmet Caterers Inc., which previously ranked No. 1; Rita's Hospitality Group, which previously ranked No. 3; Cosi Inc., which previously ranked No. 20; and Currier & Chives, which previously ranked No. 21. As reported by the Business Journal late last month, Cosi appears to have shut down multiple local stores in recent days.

Making a very strong showing in its debut on the list is No. 4-ranked PR Management Corp., a franchisee of Panera Bread that offers catering services



KRISTEN TIEG

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through its Panera Bread bakery-cafe locations. PR Management Corp. owns and operates 44 Panera Bread bakery-cafes in Massachusetts alone.

In the group of local catering revenue gainers on the list, the five largest were as follows:

Basil Tree Catering, growth of 17 percent;
Woodman's of Essex, growth of 13 percent;
Sensational Foods Catering, growth of 12 percent;
Pepper's Artful Events, growth of 11 percent; and
Bakers' Best Catering, growth of 10 percent.

"We are thrilled that this past year we had more substantial growth than usual for Basil Tree Catering," said Valerie Shulock, president of Basil Tree Catering. "We have increased our sales and marketing efforts, so that could explain some of the growth. We have also found that a number of our new customers have sought us out specifically because they wish to support a certified woman-owned and certified LGBT-owned business. Additionally, our ongoing commitment to sustainability, especially our use of compostable and reusable items, seems to be something our customers are taking an increased interest in, which we're encouraged to see. And as always, the consistent quality of our products, customer service and on-time delivery keeps our customers coming back."

Its own continued growth is a sweet victory for Woodman's, whose extensive history dates back to 1914.

"We feel Woodman's of Essex has a product that delivers consistency and an experience, excellent customer service, as well as a speedy booking process — all of which we continue to strive for in our catering division," said Maureen Woodman, director of catering sales.

Sean McFadden
Associate Editor/Research
Boston Business Journal

