

Foodservice Updates

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I thought I knew you

If you've been in business long enough, you likely have a strong idea of what your ideal customers look like, how they order from you and what they like to see from you. But COVID-19 has changed this in a couple of ways. For one, the pandemic has persisted long enough to have created lasting – or at least long-term – shifts in consumer habits and expectations. The times when people eat, what they eat, and who (and how many) they eat it with have all changed. Further, as we power through what we hope are the final months of the pandemic, recovery from it will be uneven across consumer segments. Older guests may hesitate to dine out. Families may sustain their level of takeout ordering or perhaps dine out more often, particularly if they have spent months at home managing home learning. Instability in the economy may dissuade younger consumers from using discretionary income for restaurant meals and beverages as often as they once did. Or you may not see clear demographic-specific sales patterns overall. All told, if you leaned on hunches or impressions to sustain your business before, you will now need to mine your data and be able to make actionable decisions about it every hour and every day. This will enable you to respond to small, frequent shifts in consumer behavior with promotions and menu items that connect with them – and avoid wasting food and money within your business in the meantime.



Staffing 2.0

You may have decided by now that you don't need to hire new hosts or waitstaff as you prepare your restaurant for post-pandemic service – but what about staff whose expertise is in technology? A recent report from Hospitality Tech references the southeastern U.S. restaurant brand Sonny's BBQ, which relies on the skills of two full-time, highly skilled data analysts. These analysts synthesize industry data, sales and profits, marketing statistics and other data to develop and fine-tune strategies for data analytics, customer relationship management and personalized guest experiences. Strengthening your business and brand in these difficult times is about harnessing information – about elements ranging from your market and customers to each item and promotion on your menu. That may require you to rethink how you manage your business and what expertise you need most. Doing so can help prepare your business for future bumps – and bring some needed predictability to your business in 2021



Touch-free inventory tracking

You know the appeal of technology that enables touch-free interactions at the front of the house. But increasingly there are touch-free options that can help you manage the back of the house as well. If you have already graduated from manual, paper-and-pen checklists to tablets, this takes things a step further by allowing you to use an app to carry out voice-activated, touch-free, time-efficient inventory counting. On Dec. 8, the National Restaurant Association presented a webinar about this topic in conjunction with Voice-Star.ai and Orderscape.com if you'd like to learn more about the technology.



Say cheese

Cheese makes everything better, doesn't it? As Datassential reported in its recent Cheese & Dairy Keynote report, 60 percent of foodservice operators say that the simple addition of cheese makes an item sell better. Think about offering cheese as a customizable option on burgers, paninis, pastas or salads or even experimenting with different varieties to add smoke, sharpness or even sweet flavor to a dish.

Food Trends

Queso Burger

Ingredients:

- 10 each JENNIE-O® 5.33 ounce Turkey Burger,
- 10 slices Monterey jack cheese
- 10 each ciabatta buns, sliced
- 6 ounces guacamole
- 20 slices tomato
- 6 ounces red onion, sliced



Instructions:

1. Preheat flat top grill to 350°F. Place frozen patties on hot grill. Cook for a total of approximately 8 minutes, turning 3 times. Always cook to well-done, 165°F as measured by a meat thermometer.
2. Top with cheese during last minute of cooking.
3. Place one patty on each bun. Top with guacamole, tomato, and red onion.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Jennie-O



On task with masks

Masks will be with us for a while longer and they are critical to keep the spread of COVID-19 in check this winter. Make sure your employees know how to place, remove and care for their mask in a way that minimizes the risk for contamination. They should wash hands before and after putting on a mask, adjusting it or removing it – and only handle a mask by its loops or ties in order to avoid touching their mouth, nose and eyes. The mask should fit snugly against the face, covering the nose, mouth and chin. Throw away disposable masks or launder cloth ones after use and don't ever share masks with others. Need help sourcing masks and other PPE? Team Four can help with that, we have an on-line store at <https://www.promoplace.com/1000376/Preview>



#FoodSafety

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Reinforce the right ways to clean during COVID-19

The CDC and the EPA have been recommending the use of disinfectant during the course of the pandemic, since disinfectant is a bit more effective in killing viral pathogens (particularly COVID-19) than sanitizer. However, more is not better in this case – so if you're using disinfectant, ensure your staff apply it to surfaces properly and safely. Disinfectant should be used on high-touch surfaces like door handles but is not safe for food contact surfaces. Cleaning and sanitizing food contact surfaces regularly is sufficient to keep those areas clean and safe.



Foodservice Updates

Video builds a restaurant star

If you don't regularly use video to promote your food, people and background story, listen up: A Brightcove study found that 76 percent of adults report that they make a purchase after watching a marketing video – and nearly half of consumers watch branded video on social media. As you prepare to ramp your business back up after the pandemic, consider creating a calendar of video content that you can share across your social media channels. There are a multitude of options to try. Record a mini cooking tutorial with your chef – or have him or her share favorite tips for using a seasonal ingredient. Talk about how you source food and make decisions about where to get the items you serve – or record your visit to a local farmer's market or small supplier. Have a new staffer on board with an interesting life story? Record a brief interview with the person and ask questions that share a bit about his personality, background and professional role. How about your restaurant's story – or the history behind your restaurant's location? You can share promotional content too – like a contest to win an appetizer platter for the Superbowl or a house-brewed beer subscription for a month. The key is to find ways to share your restaurant's authentic self and create useful or entertaining content that viewers will want to share. Look at this winter as a time to build your brand and strengthen customer loyalty for when people feel safe returning in bigger numbers.



Team Four/Value 4 provides customized Supply Chain Solutions and Business Consultancy to the foodservice owners and operators throughout the United States. To find out how we can help your business save money contact us at:

1-888-891-3103 or visit our web site at www.teamfourfoods.com and www.valuefour.com