

Foodservice Updates

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Ready for Anything?

Review your disaster response plan

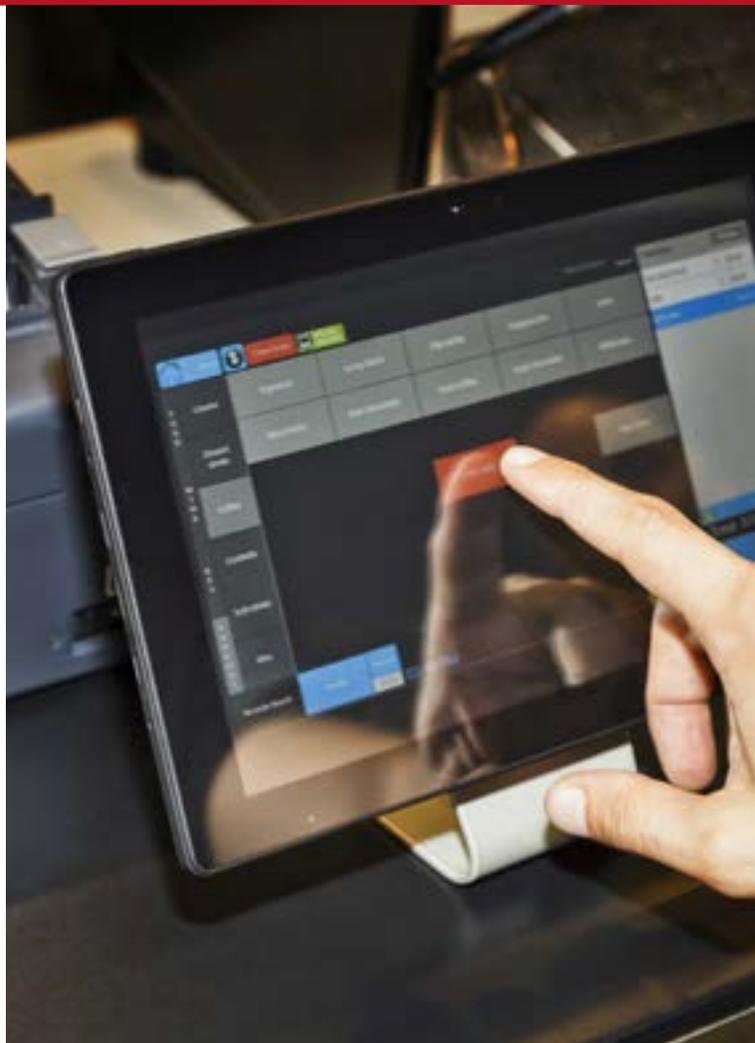
A pandemic, record-setting inflation, supply-chain struggles, weather emergencies. As punishing as these times continue to be for the foodservice industry, they may also be affirming times for those who have managed to keep operations going. The businesses that are in the best position to survive in this dynamic environment tend to be those that have planned for emergencies. For better or worse, foodservice businesses are among the last businesses to close before a disaster and among the first expected to reopen after one, which makes emergency planning critical to keeping your staff and guests safe, protecting your operation's sensitive information, and getting back on track quickly after a crisis.

Your disaster response plan is one piece of this effort. Your plan should establish a team with designated roles to help you manage in a crisis and include up-to-date information on emergency contacts, insurance coverages (limits may have changed in the current market), communication protocols and other information you need to manage the resources your business needs to resume operations after an interruption. If you need help, or simply a review of what's important to have on hand, the National Restaurant Association recently released a guide entitled Always Ready: Natural Disasters to help restaurants prepare. It brings together best practices from human resources and risk managers from independent and national restaurant brands to recommend actions for operators to take before, during and after a natural disaster. You can find the guide at www.restaurant.org.



What tech do you really need?

Restaurant tech has taken a big leap forward in the past few years, along with investment in new developments that breathlessly promise better efficiencies and lower costs. Amid all of these developments, it can be difficult to know what a restaurant really needs to compete right now. When in doubt, stick to the basics: one reliable POS that gives you real-time reports and offers some flexibility for adaptation down the line. As a recent report from Nation's Restaurant News advises, it's generally better to focus on the less-sexy tech. Systems to manage your guest data, safeguard credit card payments, and automate your training and onboarding may not make for juicy headlines, but they tend to go the farthest in protecting your information and helping you extract the insights you need from it.



Staying ahead of curbside pickup

If your curbside pickup business has become an important stream of business for you in the past couple of years, you may be seeing some increased competition from not only fast-casual competitors but also convenience stores. According to research from the National Association of Convenience Stores, 38 percent of c-store operators plan to expand app-based ordering and payments, 32 percent plan to expand mobile ordering for in-store pickup, and 14 percent expect to offer more ordering options at the pump for in-store pickup. As food options available at convenience stores improve, restaurants will need to find ways to differentiate themselves – or even partner with these businesses to capture sales from customers on the go.



Farmhouse Cauliflower Pizza

Ingredients:

- 1 Rich's Cauliflower Crust
- 2 Tbsn Roasted Garlic Oil 2 T
- ¼ Cup Shredded Mozzarella Cheese
- ¼ Cup Sautéed Portobello Mushrooms
- 1 Cup Arugula, Red Onion, Heirloom Tomato Salad
- 3 Tbsn Citrus Vinaigrette
- 2 Tbsn Shaved Parmesan
- As needed Thyme and Oregano Ricotta & Cream Drizzle

Caul it a chameleon

Is there anything cauliflower can't do? Nutrient-dense and high in antioxidants, cauliflower has become a pantry superstar for its ability to stand in for legumes and grains. Increasingly accepted as a stand-in for traditional pizza crust and rice, try it in place of chickpeas in hummus or flour in tortillas. Since cauliflower can so readily absorb the flavors and seasonings around it, consider giving it a more prominent place among your plant-forward menu options. Think outside of the box: The restaurant Sweet Liberty in Miami Beach, Fla. recently won accolades for its vegetarian cauliflower nachos, which are made with cheese, sauteed cauliflower, avocado crema, radishes, pickled jalapeño and pomegranate seeds.

Food Trends



Instructions:

1. Drizzle garlic oil on cauliflower crust, top with sautéed portobello mushrooms, mozzarella cheese and bake until cheese is melted and cauliflower crust is crispy.
2. Finish with Arugula salad, shaved parmesan and thyme and oregano cream drizzle.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Ken's

Fool-proof food safety

Where are your operation's biggest slip-ups when it comes to food safety? Improving upon them may simply be a case of making the right behaviors more visible, obvious and easy to carry out. Wherever possible, bring food safety tasks out into the open, so everyone on staff can see others doing them – or be forced to ask if they are in doubt about what they need to do. It creates some positive peer pressure to replicate those efforts across the team. Line up your stations in the order in which tasks should be completed so your team doesn't have to think about what comes next – ensure the next step is right in front of them.



#FoodSafety

#FoodSafety

Explain the why

Food safety is not a one-and-done exercise but something that requires ongoing reinforcement. That can feel like a chore if your team finds the training repetitive, or if they believe some of the more meticulous aspects of food safety regulation are over-kill. Get beyond this resistance by explaining the why – and the personal stories – behind the tasks and training you assign. Why do the current regulations exist? What problems can they prevent? Consult food safety trainers for a list of concrete examples of when food safety protocols failed – and how small mistakes in following protocol can become substantial problems.



Foodservice Updates

Ghost kitchens evolve

While ghost kitchens took off during the pandemic when dining rooms were closed, their popularity began to cool over the summer as more consumers either returned to restaurant dining rooms or reined in their spending on delivered meals. As a result, while ghost kitchens continue to grow, they are growing at a slower rate than they were. Mott Smith, cofounder and CEO of Amped Kitchens, recently said he is fielding more calls from real estate brokers looking to sell poorly located ghost kitchens – particularly those that aren't able to adapt to multiple sales channels. (Ghost kitchens that operate as food halls with delivery functionality have been more successful in capturing traffic.) How times have changed once again – and have again demonstrated how important it is to build flexibility into your business model. In the meantime, what will become of the ghost kitchen facilities that have accumulated in less-appealing locations? Restaurants looking to test new concepts or launch additional franchises may be able to find reasonable deals, including hourly and daily lease terms, on shared commercial kitchen space. The benefits of these spaces remain: Newer franchises can benefit from the skills and expertise of more seasoned franchises operating out of the kitchen, all while avoiding the costs and responsibility of real estate when trying to launch a new concept. While ghost kitchens themselves are evolving, they may still be able to help traditional restaurant concepts evolve.



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