

Foodservice Updates

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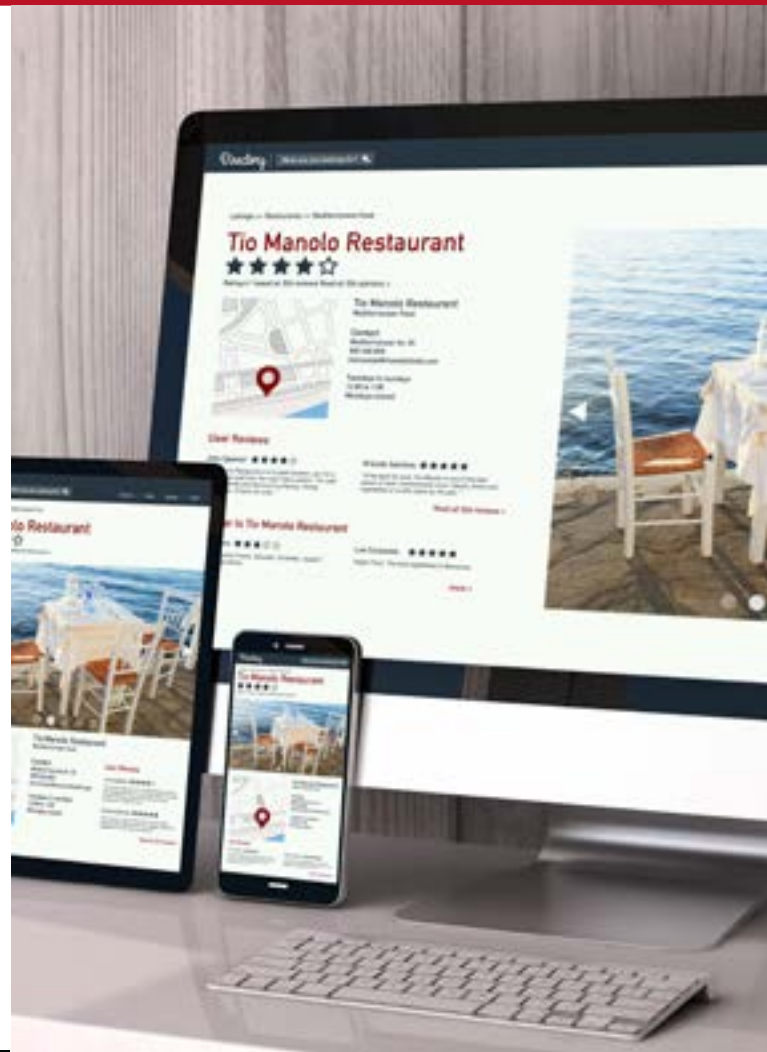
Uncover new services and income streams

For restaurants, the past couple of years have been a study in becoming more flexible: learning how to scale up in certain areas, scale down in others, adopt new streams of business and change service models based on the evolving lives and habits of guests. While pandemic challenges are waning, economic challenges remain: According to recent data from the National Restaurant Association, 85 percent of operators say their restaurant is less profitable now than it was in 2019. While the specific challenges facing the industry are changing, the need for flexibility is not. Restaurant brands that gave up their dining rooms a year ago in an effort to accommodate more efficient delivery may now find themselves being passed over as consumers seek out restaurants for special dine-in experiences. Dissecting your brand may help you get to the root of what your restaurant needs to offer to more easily navigate uncertain times. What qualities are at the heart of your brand? Sustainability? Comfort? Fresh, in-season ingredients? Consider how you can best serve your guests using a range of approaches and vehicles. From your website, to your dining room, to food trucks, to partnerships with convenience stores, delivery companies, e-commerce companies or other industry segments, how can you offer the experience of your food in ways that allow you to reach guests efficiently and flexibly – and regardless of the current economic obstacles that may stand in your way?



Could you provide a better online experience?

These days, so many of your guests' interactions with your restaurant take place without even walking through your door or picking up the phone. Whether they are looking to book a table, check your future availability, order food, purchase a gift card, or simply find up-to-date information about your menu or hours, your guests rely on the functionality of your online presence. How well does yours represent your brand? Give your website a checkup to see how much it allows guests to help themselves. A recent report from The Rail advises restaurants consider using a chat widget to answer guest inquiries instead of making them wait for an email response, as well as using an FAQ section and leaning on social media to provide updates on special promotions or changes guests should know about.



The most important step in safeguarding data

Data has become increasingly valuable to restaurants, all while making foodservice businesses more appealing targets of cybercrime. According to Check Point Research, there was a 40 percent spike in cybercrime in the leisure and hospitality industry last year. Securing entry points is important to keeping information safe. A recent report from Modern Restaurant Management said legacy POS systems can be easy targets for attack. Taking action to bolster protection of every transaction at the point of sale is the most important thing you can do to safeguard your business from cyber criminals. That means having a POS with cloud-based monitoring and tech support. It helps an operator get to the root of a data breach or other problem quickly, then get back on track with minimal interruption.



Wisconsin Fried Cheese Curds

Ingredients:

- 1 lb Cheese curds battered
- 2 fl oz Scratch Style Buttermilk Ranch Dressing
- 2 fl oz Honey Hot Wing Sauce & Glaze
- 1/2 tsp Salt & pepper combined
- 1/2 tsp Parsley

Make it memorable

As energy and food costs have spiked for consumers and restaurant operators alike, it's only natural to want to rein in spending. Restaurant operators may need to offer a little something extra to incentivize guests to place an order. While this doesn't require extravagant ingredients – operators are pinching pennies too, after all – it does require some creativity and an interest in offering something that is difficult to find elsewhere and unlikely to be prepared at home. Looking at your menu, where can you elevate the experience you offer by injecting a little comfort, nostalgia or intrigue?

Food Trends



Instructions:

1. Fry battered cheese curds until crispy.
2. Lightly sprinkle with salt and plate.
3. Chop parsley for garnish and serve with Honey Hot Wing Sauce & Glaze and Scratch Style Buttermilk Ranch Dressing for dipping.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Ken's

Don't let outdoor gear compromise safety

As the cooler months approach and your staff comes to work in bulkier clothing and footwear to protect against the elements, these items may introduce contamination or pose safety risks to your food preparation and serving areas. According to Steritech, this is among the top 10 food safety challenges in foodservice operations. To minimize your risk, make sure you have a separate area for your staff to stow coats, bags and other gear – and that this area is regularly cleaned out and inspected for potential contaminants, as well as for risks for slips, trips and falls.



#FoodSafety

#FoodSafety

Put allergy information at guests' fingertips

Beyond the dangers food allergies can cause to health and safety, allergic reactions can deliver unwanted publicity to restaurants – and that has been happening with greater frequency as food allergies have become more prevalent. According to the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Connection Team, the number of people with a food allergy in America has doubled in each of the last decades. Having systems to get accurate, up-to-date allergy information to your guests when they need it is more important than ever – and it can earn you a loyal following of guests who trust your brand with their health. Consider leveraging tabletop technology to provide detailed information about your menu. The full nutritional information of a dish can be accessible via a tablet and updated electronically and automatically across your locations. Receiving this information directly from the restaurant can also minimize the stress a guest may feel when a server has to check with the chef about allergy information and then relay the message back.



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Recession? Maybe. Restaurant downturn? Not necessarily.

In the past four decades, the U.S. has experienced six recessions – but only two of them precipitated a decline for the foodservice industry. While the industry is facing strains, a restaurant downturn is far from certain. As a recent Technomic report indicated, the foodservice industry has some built-in resilience because of the segments of the population it serves (education and healthcare, for example) and because it is designed to offer convenience and experiences – benefits that consumers will seek in both good times and bad. What’s more, consumers are not finding less expensive meals at grocery stores right now, so why not skip the at-home food prep and get a more interesting dining experience from a restaurant? Still, steady sales aren’t a given for restaurants in this environment and value will continue to be of high importance to consumers. Expect guests to scrutinize any unexpected fees on the bill. Delivered food may feel like an extravagance, so provide offers that make curbside pickup or onsite dining convenient and appealing. Look at your menu and roster of limited-time offers and make sure you’re offering something memorable and different. Double down on your menu cost analysis so every item is profitable but doesn’t feel overpriced to the consumer.



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