

Foodservice Updates

In This Issue

- Ready to pop | A season for smoke | Extreme weather leading to new restaurant safety measures | Show you're allergy-aware |
- Tech helps independents level up to bigger brands | Ghosts should be transparent

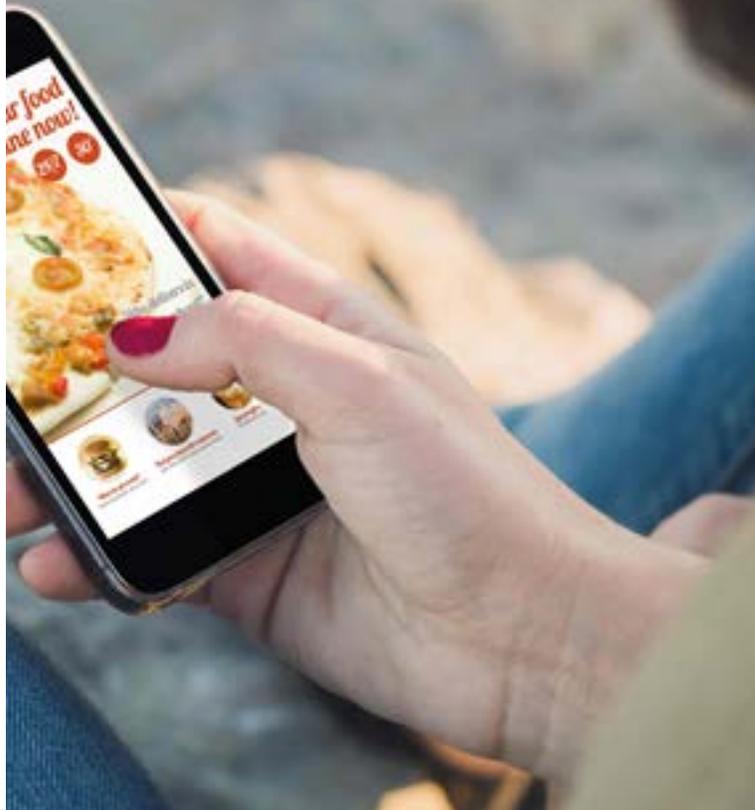
Pay it forward

Is it finally time for big changes when it comes to restaurant pay? After years of restaurants testing the waters with no-tipping policies and, in many parts of the country, having to adapt to new minimum-wage requirements, the pandemic (and the unruly diners it has brought with it) may be providing an industry-wide time of reckoning. Many operators are finding that making adjustments to the compensation they offer – whether through their hourly wage, tipping policy, or health benefits – has become a must at a time when the industry is losing workers to other professions. The operators who have found ways to make it work are reporting some early success: According to a recent New York Times report, operators who have changed their compensation structure to ensure a steady living wage – or even simply offering other quality-of-life benefits like flexible schedules, lower health premiums and student debt-reduction programs in its place – are attracting staff. Providing income and scheduling stability stands to help restaurants retain their staff too (and minimize the high costs of employee turnover). Of course, it takes a strong business model to make it work financially, and operators are making such money-saving moves as streamlining menus and adding a service fee to checks to make that possible. As you consider your operation's strengths and weaknesses when it comes to employee compensation, where are there opportunities for you to improve your staff's quality of life in meaningful ways? If raising wages isn't an option, are there ways for you to make your existing positions a better long-term fit with your staff's personal lives – and minimize your turnover costs in the process?



Tech helps independents level up to bigger brands

If you've ever ordered a pizza from Domino's, you've gotten a glimpse into how a restaurant brand can harness technology to expedite ordering, upsell successfully and improve loyalty. But it's one thing for a behemoth brand to accomplish this and quite another for a smaller, independent one. Slice, a tech platform for independent pizza restaurants, is looking to change that and its consumer app has attracted 16,000 independents so far. But according to The Spoon, which named Slice to its list of top-10 tech companies recently, Slice's acquisition of the POS startup InStore is what's really allowing it to help indie restaurants improve their customer experience. It's enabling smaller pizza restaurants to offer the kind of loyalty programs and integrated marketing programs that make ordering from a small, one-store pizzeria as seamless as it is at Domino's.



Ghosts should be transparent

Throughout the pandemic, ghost kitchens have enabled many restaurant operators to keep business going behind the scenes when dining rooms were closed. But as it turns out, operators may be able to build more trust with the public if they pull back the curtain on the foods they're preparing in ghost kitchens. According to a Datassential survey, three-quarters of consumers said they would support a local restaurant that "goes ghost" in order to stay in business. At the same time, they're sensitive to restaurants using ghost kitchens to present multiple faces to the public: 55 percent of respondents said they think it's dishonest for a restaurant to sell the same food under a different name and two-thirds said virtual brands should share their locations and state that they are digital-only concepts. If you operate a ghost kitchen, consider telling your customers why you're doing it – and how it helps improve the final product they receive. Instead of turning them off, it may actually help you build trust with them.



Campanelle with jerk chicken, peppers and tomatoes

Ingredients:

- 1 1/4 Barilla® campanelle
- 1 Lb Boneless skinless chicken breast extra virgin olive oil, divided garlic
- 1 Clove, minced
- 1 Red bell pepper, small dice
- 1 Green bell pepper, small dice
- 1 Yellow bell pepper, small dice
- 2 Plum tomatoes, small dice
- 1/4 Cilantro, chopped
- 1/4 Cup green onion, chopped
- 2 Tbsp jerk seasoning
- Salt & black pepper to taste

A season for smoke

There is something about autumn that triggers specific food cravings – and its crisp, cool days and nights are perfect for smoky seasonings. On your menu, smoke lends cozy, campfire-like heat, which can appeal to guests looking to enjoy their meal outdoors. Consider adding some smoky flavor to poultry, beef, fish, pizza and pasta dishes, as well as to your beverage and dessert menus for something unexpected.

Food Trends



Instructions:

1. Add 1 tbsp. Of oil, garlic, and jerk seasoning to chicken. Marinate 30 minutes to overnight.
2. In a skillet with 1 tbsp. Of oil, sauté chicken on both sides for 6-7 minutes or until thoroughly cooked, set aside.
3. Meanwhile, bring a pot of water to a boil and cook pasta according to package directions, reserving 1 cup of pasta cooking water.
4. In the same pan, add remaining olive oil over high heat. Add peppers, season with salt and pepper and sauté for 2 minutes.
5. Dice chicken. Stir in tomatoes and diced chicken, cook for 2 more minutes. Add 1 cup pasta cooking water.
6. Drain pasta, toss with sauce, and add 1/2 of the cilantro and 1/2 of the green onions; season with salt and black pepper and remove from the fire.
7. Garnish with remaining green onion and cilantro.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Barilla



Extreme weather leading to new restaurant safety measures

New safety standards are in the pipeline that could impact your procedures and the frequency of inspections for back-of-house workers exposed to dangerous heat. In response to increased episodes of record-breaking outdoor temperatures in recent months, the Occupational Health & Safety Administration (OSHA) is drafting new standards for restaurant kitchens in an effort to encourage practices like having cold water readily accessible, providing breaks to allow workers to cool off, and helping new workers to gradually build a tolerance to heat, Restaurant Business reports. While the final rules won't become regulations for a number of months, expect an increase in inspections that cover these practices in the meantime.



#FoodSafety

#FoodSafety

Show you're allergy-aware

Approximately 32 million Americans, including 5.6 million children under age 18, have food allergies, according to Food Allergy Research & Education. That amounts to two children in every classroom. Those numbers put pressure on restaurants to manage food allergies effectively – but on the flip side, they also present an opportunity for restaurants to generate an especially loyal and valuable following: McKinsey research found that consumers looking to avoid certain allergens are especially loyal to brands and also willing to spend more money in an effort to avoid an allergen. The quality of your communication plays a major role in your success. When your staff is informed of a food allergy by a customer, they should repeat it clearly to confirm it, then involve a minimum of team members to carry out an order to avoid a game of telephone in which details are misconstrued. That may mean passing all orders for allergic guests on to one manager, who oversees the order from the preparation stage through delivery to the customer.



Foodservice Updates

Ready to pop

At a time when restaurants may be struggling to get consumers to come out to eat, pop-up restaurants have many things going for them: They often incorporate fun, surprising, or novel concepts; they generate excitement and increase the potential for viral, time-sensitive sharing on social media because they are designed to be temporary; and they're low-risk outlets for experimentation. As a result, they also happen to be made for the moment: Supply-chain challenges are limiting what chefs have on hand week to week and pushing them to pivot quickly and be all the more creative in their recipe development and presentations. The rise of ghost kitchens – and even chefs preparing meals out of their home kitchens – is making it possible for operators to test new ideas and cuisine combinations in lower-risk environments. The novelty of what restaurants can offer through pop-up concepts can also provide the promise of a memorable experience – an incentive consumers may need when meal-kit companies and grocery stores are offering options that make it easier to eat meals at home. Could your business try a pop-up concept – whether as a brick-and-mortar location or as a short-term takeout or delivery option? Consider how a pop-up concept might help you create an additional income stream or test what menu innovations guests respond to.



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