

Foodservice Updates

In This Issue

[Raise your game in a competitive industry](#) | [Wine lovers, take heart](#) | [Avoid the safety risks of being understaffed](#) | [Go to the source to manage safety risks of summer salads](#) | [Could geofencing improve your guests' takeout experience?](#) | [When social media supercharges your customer engagement](#)

Chip away at avoidable overhead costs

Though the cost of food and labor tend to make the most headlines when it comes to current industry challenges, those aren't the only budget line items on the minds of restaurant operators right now. According to the National Restaurant Association's 2023 State of the Industry Report, a commanding majority of respondents are spending much more on overhead costs – including those for insurance, utilities, licenses and other items a restaurant needs to run – than they were a few years ago. While some costs are out of an operator's control, there are a number of expenses that can be minimized with some planning. Consider insurance, for one. In addition to simply shopping around for the best quote, you can take steps to position your business for a better deal. While insurance prices are increasing across the board, insurers will provide better terms to a risk-aware business. Demonstrate your sound risk management by ensuring your fire alarm, sprinkler system and security cameras are up to date and functioning well. Document your staff's safety training and provide evidence of your strong (or improved) accident record. If you do have a solid safety history, consider increasing your deductibles so you pay lower premiums each month. If your business has made major changes to its physical premises or how it operates, make sure you update your policies to account for those adjustments so you can avoid gaps in your coverage. Finally, if you're in the market for several types of insurance, such as liability, property and cyber protection, for example, look for a provider who can offer a bundled package that can save you money – and ensure they have a solid record on claims payment.



Tech Talk

Could geofencing improve your guests' takeout experience?

For certain takeout foods, an extra few minutes of time spent sitting out and waiting for pickup can mean the difference between a happy customer and a dissatisfied one. (Anyone who has eaten a soggy French fry from a takeout bag probably understands.) But what if you could orchestrate your orders to precisely coincide with the arrival of the people ready to collect and consume them? Geofencing can be especially helpful in preserving menu items that quickly decline in quality after they are cooked and removed from under warming lamps. Pymnts reports that McDonald's, for one, is updating its mobile and payment functions to alert kitchen staff when mobile order-ahead customers are near the store. They are aiming to ensure that the customer's order is ready and warm at the moment they arrive, all while boosting kitchen efficiency and enhancing the customer experience.



When social media supercharges your customer engagement



Social media planning and posting can feel like a one-and-done exercise: Conceive of eye-catching content, post it, hope for the best and move on. But if you're strategic about your posts – and simply aware of how people respond to your brand – you can generate a response that's far larger than any individual post. Take Chipotle's recent experience on TikTok with a menu hack shared by two content creators on the platform. Late last year, the pair's review of a Chipotle steak quesadilla with fajita veggies touted a do-it-yourself dressing made from the brand's chipotle-honey vinaigrette and sour cream. So many people tried to order the off-menu item that Chipotle decided to promote it as a limited-time offer on its app and website this spring. When you consider potential contests, invitations to share menu preferences, or other outreach to customers via social media, think a few steps ahead. How might you use guest feedback to not only reward people for their loyalty but also demonstrate your own engagement with the people who enjoy your food most?

Food Trends

Wine lovers, take heart

Despite red wine's long-held reputation for health benefits, mounting evidence has shown there is no healthy level of alcohol consumption. More consumers are abstaining from alcohol as a result. According to Global-Data research, 16 percent of consumers are actively trying to cut back on alcoholic drinks and 39 percent say they consume these drinks only in moderation. Take this as an opportunity to fine-tune your beverage menu by adding not only naturally alcohol-free beverages but also non-alcoholic wines. While they can be hit-or-miss, these wines are finally getting some respect from the wine industry. There are some hidden gems to add to your menu that may help you stand out to guests who would love to have a guilt-free glass of wine with dinner.




Avoid the safety risks of being understaffed

Restaurants have become increasingly adept at doing more with less in the past few years, but if you're still trying to work at full capacity with a skeleton crew, you're likely increasing your risk of foodborne illness. Condensing your menu, as well as decreasing your hours and available tables, can help you make sure you're not letting critical food safety tasks slip through the cracks. Beyond that, if your operation looks a lot different than it did a few years ago, consider working with a food safety expert who can evaluate your current processes and suggest approaches that can help you save time and increase efficiency without compromising food safety.



PLEASE BE
PATIENT
WE ARE VERY
UNDERSTAFFED
THANK YOU!



Now Hiring

Cooks

Wait Staff

Bartenders

Apply NOW!

Ask Bartender for Application or Call

#FoodSafety

Go to the source to manage safety risks of summer salads

Fresh fruit and vegetables are so appealing on hot days. Just be mindful of the food safety risks these foods can carry. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there were a total of 86 reported foodborne illness outbreaks in the United States associated with the consumption of fresh produce between 2010 and 2019. These outbreaks resulted in 20 deaths, as well as more than 4,000 reported illnesses, though these illnesses are often underreported. While it's necessary to take safety precautions within restaurant kitchens, the risks start at the farm. As food safety expert Doug Powell mentions in a report from U.S. Foods, it's important for operators to get to know their farms well and not be swayed by buzzwords like "natural" and "sustainable." Understand their practices when it comes to irrigation, soil fertilization and hand washing.



Foodservice Updates

Raise your game in a competitive industry

Feeling competitive? A lot of your industry peers are. Recent research from the National Restaurant Association found that nearly half of operators expect competition to be more intense this year than it was last year. Only 7 percent expect it to ease – and that’s in an environment where the majority of operators say there either the same number of restaurants or fewer restaurants than there were in 2019. Your technology stack can help you make sure you’re seizing every opportunity to serve guests well and keep them coming back. You can accomplish this in several ways: Smooth out and speed up your ordering process. Your mobile app can go far in representing the experience of your restaurant. Make it easy for people to view the menu, place orders and make reservations with a minimum of clicks and scrolls. Regular customers should have easy access to previous orders and be prompted with special offers and add-ons that complement their favorite menu items. In-house, consider incorporating tableside ordering and payment to improve order accuracy, expedite service, and ensure your staff can make best use of their time. Depending on your restaurant category, consider using digital menus and signage to update your menu in real time and draw guests to your most profitable items. Finally, your customer data – as well as information you collect about the competitive landscape – can help you better understand how people feel about your menu, keep tabs on your service, and allow you to stay nimble so you’re able to make proactive changes to benefit your business.



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