Foodservice Updates

In This Issue

Use takeout to build more business

A March survey of U.S. restaurant guests had some revealing findings. Revenue Management Solutions, which surveyed 800 restaurant guests about their dining habits, found that higher-income households and families with children were driving decreases in traffic across all restaurant segments. The share of higher-income households (those earning more than $99,000 annually) that reported spending more of their disposable income on restaurants dropped significantly – 73 percent in the fourth quarter of 2022 as compared to 37 percent in the first quarter of this year. A Modern Restaurant Management report about the survey points to inflation being the likely cause of the change – and it's also generating a shift in habits, with more guests willing to collect restaurant food in person than pay extra for delivery. If this is your experience, consider it an opportunity to elevate your in-person marketing efforts. How can you bring your brand front of mind for guests in ways not available to you if you were sending the same order through a third-party delivery company? Could you provide special last-minute offers to those collecting their meals? Extra loyalty points? Suggest additional items to complement an order? Then consider how smooth you make the collection process, whether through lower-tech means like easy curbside pickup or dedicated parking, or higher-tech means like geofencing to ensure a person's order is hot and ready to go as soon as they arrive.

Tech Talk

Protect your mobile app's security

Your restaurant's mobile app can provide a treasure trove of useful data to help you grow your business. Increasingly, it's how guests prefer to order (and a recent study found that 35 percent of guests said these apps encouraged them to spend more). But as Chick-fil-a has learned, a cyber breach of a restaurant's mobile app can put these benefits at risk. Cybersecurity is an ever-evolving need for businesses, so ensure you have layered protections in place to avoid making your restaurant's app an easy target for criminals. Ongoing testing, updating and patching are required to minimize the risk of threat actors seizing guest data. As a recent Modern Restaurant Management report suggests, frequent penetration testing can help identify security issues, as well as automated tests for security and compliance with industry standards for cyber protection.

Considering tech investment? Follow the map

Restaurant technology can feel like a minefield: The options are dizzying, new niches are emerging to support functions across restaurant businesses, and the economic climate is leading to both consolidation and the launch of new players. If you're among the many operators planning to invest in restaurant technology this year, it may help to have a roadmap to help navigate the possibilities. The Spoon recently released its 2023 Restaurant Tech Ecosystem Map, which plots out companies by category. It's worth a review if the array of options and applications in this space feel overwhelming.

Food Trends

Could AI know what your guests want to drink?

Need a creative new recipe? Some operators are turning to ChatGPT for help in fine-tuning ideas. According to a recent article in the Robb Report, Raven Bar in San Francisco tapped some key ingredients and a flavor profile into the AI tool and landed on a new concoction that combines mezcal infused with guajillo chili peppers, blood orange, grapefruit juice and Firewater bitters. To give credit where it's due, they named the new beverage CraftGPT. The tool can be a helpful means of generating the initial ideas that lead to new recipes.

Be seafood safe this summer

Warm-weather breaks by the sea make seafood even more craveable. But because of spoilage risks and the danger it can pose to allergic guests, ensure your staff understands the best methods for handling and storing seafood safely in its different forms. When it comes to refrigeration, store seafood below prepared foods and produce but above beef, pork and poultry. Store finfish like salmon, tuna and cod on ice while refrigerated and use them within two days. Live crabs and lobsters must be cooked immediately on the day of purchase, clams and mussels should be used within three days, and oysters within a week to 10 days. Any frozen seafood is best defrosted in a refrigerator overnight.

#FoodSafety

When assessing safety failures,
find the weak legs

A recent Food Safety Magazine report encourages organizations to think of sanitation as resting on a three-legged stool. People, training programs, and hygienic design and maintenance represent the three legs – and when one or more legs is compromised, it brings down the others. If you have a safety failure, scrutinize each of these legs of the stool to find the root cause. Do you have sufficient people on hand to complete the tasks required? Do they understand what they need to accomplish and when? Is your equipment able to be cleaned easily and does your staff have the appropriate tools and cleaning materials they need? You may see patterns emerging that can help you zero in on your biggest risks.

Foodservice Updates

What to do with all that data

Most restaurant operators across categories are collecting a lot more data these days from a range of sources – whether it be from their POS system, loyalty program, digital ordering platforms, inventory system, labor management platform or some combination of the above. But when it comes to translating this information into actionable steps to grow sales, traffic and profits, a majority of operators still aren't making the connection. New market research from Nation's Restaurant News Intelligence found that 70 percent of operators wonder if they are optimizing the guest data they currently collect. This may be because inadequate data is being collected, or because the data is stuck in silos and isn't easily or automatically combined to allow operators to extract actionable insights. Sound familiar? Using a data analytics platform – Keboola and Zoho are just two examples of companies in the market – can help you pull data from across your business and convert the information into proactive steps that can help you drive better results. Since your POS is the nerve center of your business, your POS provider may also be able to help you find ways to get your systems to talk to each other and minimize manual effort on your part.

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