

CHECKLIST:

Marketing Your Restaurant During COVID-19

Now more than ever it's important to be aggressive with your marketing. Research shows that those who continue marketing through previous downtimes will do better in a recovery.

MAKE A PLAN

- What is your menu going to be? What are your new hours?
- What's your safety plan and how can you reassure customers they will be safe?
- How will people be ordering?
- What are your options for additional add-on sales (ex. meal kits, gift cards, merchandise, selling gear online, shipping your products, etc)?

BE IN THE NOW

- Don't Ignore COVID-19
- Be human - Show your personality, have some fun!
- Post how you are grateful.
- Post how you are helpful.

SEND INFO TO YOUR EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS

- New menus, hours, offerings.
- If you have a new menu every week or daily specials, send them out often.



TAKE PHOTOS & VIDEOS OF NEW ITEMS

People are visual. It is much easier to sell things people can see.

- Photos and videos provide good content for social media.
- Photos of you handling food or handing takeout to customers, include masks & gloves to reassure hesitant buyers.
- Include yourself and your staff.
- Try black and white behind the scenes photos.

ASK YOUR CUSTOMERS FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Ask them:

- To vote for you in community/industry 'Best Of' polls.
- To share your social media posts.
- To review your business on Facebook, Yelp, Saratoga.com.
- To help you support your employees.
- To buy gift cards to donate to frontline workers, those in need or to use on a future date.

CONNECT WITH CUSTOMERS VIRTUALLY

- Plan a live video to celebrate a milestone, such as an anniversary.
- Record a cooking show or demonstrate how to make your signature cocktail.
- Record behind the scenes videos in your restaurant or brewery.
- Take people on a virtual tour Stream live entertainment - music, lessons, group gatherings on Zoom.



SOCIAL MEDIA IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

- Post frequently to remain top of mind.
- Post your hours, menus, how people can order - Pin it to the top in Facebook.
- Post daily specials using photos of the food (Avoid 'text only' posts. People share photos, not text).
- Post new weekly menus (Design them in a program where you can export the menu as a jpeg, gif, png or other format).
 - *Avoid PDFs or taking a picture of a printed menu. The font will be too hard to read.*
- Go 'live' to let people know how you are doing and to let your customers know how grateful you are for their business.
- Use Facebook and Instagram stories in addition to posts.

BUILD YOUR EMAIL MARKETING LIST

You want the biggest, best email marketing list possible to hit the ground running when the Stay at Home order is lifted.

- Do giveaways, polls, quizzes, etc. on your website and/or social media.
- Shameless plug -- Reach a larger audience by using Mannix Marketing's giveaway and contesting program to grow your list
 - *We will set up the giveaway, promote it in our email newsletters, on our websites and via social media.*
 - *Provide a prize that people are excited about and you will reap the rewards. You can expect 500 - 1000 new email addresses for each giveaway you do. Higher value items or multiple winners will net the best results.*

UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION

Post When You Will Be Open On:

- Your Website.
- Your Social Media pages. Consider doing a pinned post with new hours and what you are offering.
- Google My Business and Bing Places.
- Are you temporarily closed? Update with that info as well. Don't leave people wondering.

ADVERTISE TO NEW AUDIENCES

- Use press releases to reach local media
- Shameless plug - Utilize our email list to reach over 75,000 subscribers
- Utilize industry or local influencers -- foodie bloggers, food groups, tourism sites (like Saratoga.com, LakeGeorge.com).

PLAN AHEAD

We are just at the beginning of the 'new normal' the COVID-19 crisis created and the timeline is uncertain. What is certain is there will be a lot of restaurants vying for customers.

- Build loyalty now.
- We are here to help.

“There are few things more proven in the world of marketing than the power of advertising in a recession.”

-Mark Ritson (MarketingWeek)

