

## 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)

