



Comprehensive Guide to Marketing Your Restaurant



BRUS/VANN	
55. / 69.	Sork Appleton
58. / 112.	Sork Woodbar
68. / 112.	Pigpal
	Picpal Max
	7 up
	Solo
69.	Mozel Epilomost
110.	Ferra Murell
110.	Ferra Time
115.	
15.	

[illegible]



JOIN OUR NEWSLETTER FOR TIPS AND ONGOING WEBINARS

KAREE LAING

FOUNDER OF RESTAURANT BRAND BUILDERS
AND RESTAURANT MARKETING EXPERT

In the competitive world of hospitality, keeping your restaurant bustling with happy customers requires more than just exquisite food and a charming ambiance; it demands a strategic approach to marketing.

Drawing from over a decade of experience in restaurant marketing, I delve into the essentials of crafting a marketing strategy that not only attracts diners but turns them into loyal patrons. This guide serves as your gateway to understanding how to position your restaurant for success, leveraging both traditional methods and digital innovations.

From building a strong online presence and harnessing the power of social media, to creating memorable dining experiences and engaging with your community, I share insights on navigating the complexities of the industry. Whether you're just starting out or looking to rejuvenate your established venue, these tailored strategies are designed to ensure your restaurant not only survives but thrives in today's everevolving market. Join us as we explore the foundational pillars and creative tactics that can set your restaurant apart and keep your tables filled night after night.

PROMOTIONS & ADVERTISING



PARTNERSHIPS & CROSS PROMOTIONS



The key to success with cross promotions and partnerships is to know your customer and find partners that will drive in more of those customers. Be specific in who you want to bring in based on the research you found with your buyer personas.

SOME GENERAL RULES WHEN PICKING A PARTNER

- Select a partner that is ingrained in the community, someone that will draw customers from a 2 mile radius to your location? Sure PETA is a great cause but if they don't have a large number of their supporters within a 2 mile radius of your location, chances are they won't be longtime customers nor will they come in to support the event.
- Size matters. You want to ensure the group you work with has enough people and reach to bring in enough traffic. You can estimate that a good fundraiser will draw roughly 20% of the partners database.
 - Do some digging on their social media accounts and see how many followers they have and how engaged their community is? Are they commenting a lot? Interacting with the brand?

WHEN EXPLORING OPTIONS, CAPTURE SOME GENERAL DATA

When you do decide who would be the right partner for you, your initial conversation with them should result in capturing some general data:

- What is their email subscriber list
- Are they heavily Male/Female
- Have they done partnerships in the past? What results would they consider a success? Make sure you set goals so you both walk away happy.

FUNDRAISERS

They say it is better to give than receive and what better way to give than raising money for a good cause. Fundraisers are a great way to introduce yourself to new customers.



TIPS TO PICKING A GOOD FUNDRAISING PARTNER

- Utilizing your buyer personas to identify causes that will gain their support.
 - **Example:** If you have found that you have a lot of young families that support your business you might look to hosting a fundraiser for the local school or youth sports group.
- Was there a recent event that needs funds raised to support your community? A public organization that has lost funding that you can support?
 - **Example:** There was a fire recently and you want to raise money to support the local firefighters. You found out that your local parks have lost funding and you see an opportunity to step in. The local food pantry is in need of support to help feed those in need.

18% of Americans have said that supporting youth and family causes are most important to them.

Three out of four young adults are willing to raise money on behalf of an organization that matters to them.

Data provided by QGIV

STRUCTURING YOUR FUNDRAISER

- How much should you give? A typical fundraiser will provide 20% of the sales from that meal to the organization. Look at your budget... could you afford to do 30% or even 50%? The more you are able to contribute the higher the turnout for your event.
- Is there a specific menu item you want to emphasize through this fundraiser? Does it coincide with a holiday? Do you have a new menu launch? You can give the proceeds from that particular item to the nonprofit
- Set expectations. Do not commit to a fundraising partner unless they are willing to cross-promote. One of the motivators to host a fundraiser is to get in front of their audience and raise money for a good cause. Pick a day and time that work for you. What I mean by this is look at your business are you trying to fill a certain daypart? Are Monday and Tuesdays slower nights for you? You want to be strategic about when you host a fundraiser. You don't want to bring in more people when you are already busy, this will result in poor customer service.

GETTING THE WORD OUT

- Pick a date close to when your chosen organization has a meeting, this will provide a platform to inform the entire group about the upcoming fundraiser
- Provide marketing materials for your partner organization to distribute
 - Typically this is an HTML (something that can be emailed)
 - And a flyer (that can be printed and handed out).

DON'T STOP AT PARTNERSHIPS & FUNDRAISERS...

FOOD DONATIONS

There are a lot of opportunities to provide food for people. Local businesses, medical offices, police, fire stations... you name it. Doing a good deed by providing meals can produce some loyal customers.

RECEIPT DAY / MOVIE TICKET PROMO

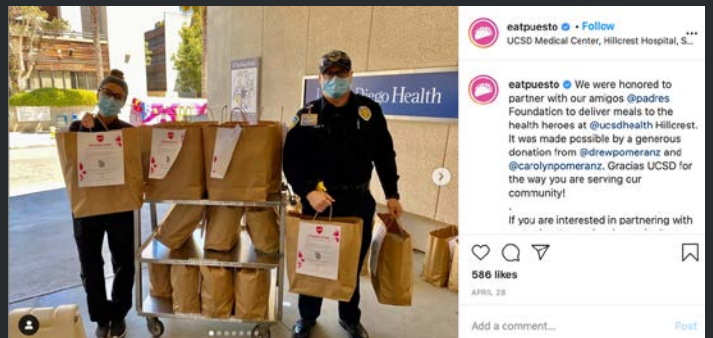
If you are located close to other retailers consider partnering with them to allow their customers to bring in their receipts to your location for a discount or BOGO. It's a win/win for you and them, they are giving their customers an added benefit and you are introducing new people to your food!

COMPANY DAYS

Find local business surrounding your restaurant and set up a company day. Contact their human resources department to find a day and time that works for you and them (remember offer them one of your slower day parts). Employees can visit your restaurant on a certain day at a certain time and receive an offer. This can be a discounted menu item, BOGO or something free with a minimum purchase. You can also apply this tactic to youth sports teams or local organizations.

CARD CAPTURE

Set up a bowl by your register to collect customer business cards, give them a chance to win a free meal. You can structure this a few ways: Free Meal For Them, BOGO or invite their whole team in to dine for free.



DISCOUNTS

Implementing discounts is a slippery slope. You don't want to distribute so many that people won't dine with you unless they have a coupon. Be thoughtful and strategic on when and where you use them.

The number one rule I have when giving out discounts is put an expiration date for the offer. This will let you manage hours and food ordering as well as prepare your restaurant for an uptick in customers. Keep in mind you will see the highest redemption of these offers at the beginning of the expiration window and towards the end. The sweet spot for offers is one week.

My all time favorite discount is a Buy One Get One Free. I like it because you are giving the discount to the recipient and they will bring in another potential customer with them to redeem the offer. In addition, you will break even on the cost of the promotion because they have to purchase something of the lesser or equivalent price in order to claim it.

BE WARY OF THE FREE OFFER

If you run the chance of bringing in only discount customers who will not return after they get something for free. Instead consider the following:

- Percentage based - 20% off for firefighters/police
- Calendar-based promotions - Taco Tuesday
- Buy \$20 and receive \$3 off or some variation of spend a certain amount and receive a specified discount
- Gift card promotion, encourage people to buy a \$20 gift card and get a coupon for \$5 off that needs to be redeemed within a particular time frame.
- Think of key times of the year when people are likely to buy gift cards: Mothers Day, Fathers Day, Graduation and Christmas/Hannakuh



ADVERTISING

Awareness, Consideration, Conversation. These are the big three goals when it comes to digital advertising. Let's set your goal. Most likely your primary goal is conversion. Conversion is the number of people that saw your ad and clicked on it sending them to your website and hopefully placing an order.

Not to be overlooked are brand awareness and consideration. Building your brand awareness will help in distinguishing you from the competition, it drives consumers decisions and helps drive your market share just to mention a few of its high points. Considering this approach engages customers to consider you when making their next purchase and how you do this is by having brand awareness.

As you dive into the advertising waters it is important that you determine what your goal is so that you can fine-tune your images and messaging to get results.



WHAT DO WE HOPE TO LEARN?

If you are going to advertise there are three types of digital advertising that you should include in your arsenal:

- Google Ads
- Social Media Ads
- Social Media Promoted Posts

When you think about messaging for your ads here are a few campaign to consider:

- Promote Delivery, Curbside Pick Up, Take Out or your Patio Dining
- Seasonal specials
- Grow Restaurant Catering
- Target existing customers with retargeting ads, this allows you to run special promotions to get them to come back in.

GOOGLE ADS

People are searching for the answer to their problem, you want to be their answer. Someone might be disappointed with all the sandwiches they have been eating.... they want to find the "best sandwich shop in Kennebunkport" Google Ads will put your restaurant as a banner ad at the top of their search.

When potential customers search for restaurants (like yours) in Google Search or Maps you can place your advertisement at the top of that search. The design of it is limited to only a certain amount of characters and no images but it shows up at the top and best of all gets clicks which.... drives traffic to your website.

Ad · www.doordash.com/ ▾

Chipotle - DoorDash® Delivery - \$0 Delivery Fees on 1st Order

A World of Food at Your Fingertips. Order from **Chipotle** Today! No Waiting in Line. No Minimum Order Size. Search by Cuisines. Easy Online Ordering. 100s of Top Restaurants. Easy Ordering. Quick & Reliable **Delivery**. 100s of Local Restaurants. Order Online. [No-Contact Delivery](#) · [\\$0 Delivery with DashPass](#) · [Pickup & Takeout](#) · [Game Day Favorites](#)

A FEW THINGS TO CONSIDER AS YOU SETUP YOUR ADS:

- You can set your own budget, and you only pay for the clicks you get on your ad... so you are only committing to a dollar amount you are comfortable with spending
- Use keywords that are relevant to your business
- Empower your customers to take action and make a decision.... "order now!"
- Wherever you are linking the ad to make sure it mirrors the ad. For example, asking them to "order now" when they click on the ad it should put them on your ordering page.
- Be sure to share your location Try running multiple ads with different copy to see which one performs better, monitor your results, and make changes based on what is performing better.

SIGNUP AND START YOUR FIRST CAMPAIGN HERE



SOCIAL MEDIA

When we look at social media through an advertising lens there are some great advantages: You can be hyper focused with who you advertise to and you can control how much you spend. You already picked your social media platforms, and you established your buyer personas so the hard work is done, now we just need to turn on the ads.

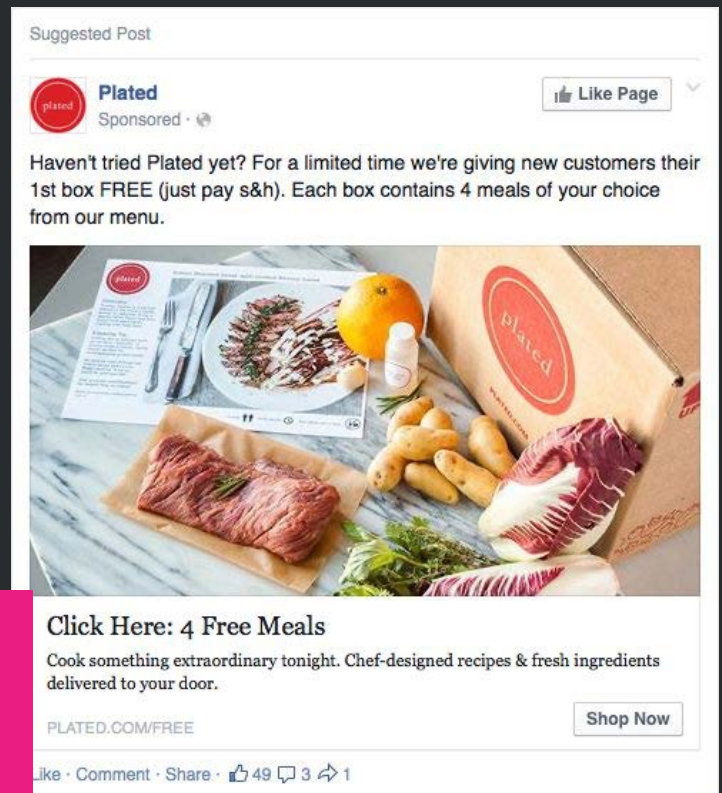
PROMOTED POSTS

What are they and why should you care? Promoted posts are ads that are a bit of a chameleon because they show up in a user's feed as a regular post. Why would you use a promoted post instead of a regular ad you might be thinking.

To answer that question we need to talk algorithm. Social media has its own way of sorting posts in a user's feed (its algorithm), they prioritize which content they think the user is likely to want to see. But didn't the user choose to follow you? So then you should show up in their feed like normal right?.... not the case. Enter... promoted posts.

Promoted posts help ensure that your followers and friends of your followers are seeing your posts. When and why would you want to use this you might ask? If you have a post that has performed well you might want to make sure as many like-minded people see it. This tactic is especially effective if you are interested in gaining likes, comments, shares and building brand awareness.

You can promote a post or "boost" your post through your social media account.



A FEW TIPS BEFORE YOU SWITCH

1. Your buyer personas are going to come back into play here. Social media ads allow you to not only target people based on their location, age and sex but also their psychographic information so you can be hyperfocused with who you are paying to advertise to. I should mention that you can even target your competitors audience!
2. Take a look at your existing posts. Which ones are performing the best, getting the most comments, likes and shared. You might want this to inform what you advertise.
3. Monitor your results, lean into the platforms analytics to steer where you spend your dollars and how you might need to pivot.

SOCIAL MEDIA ADS

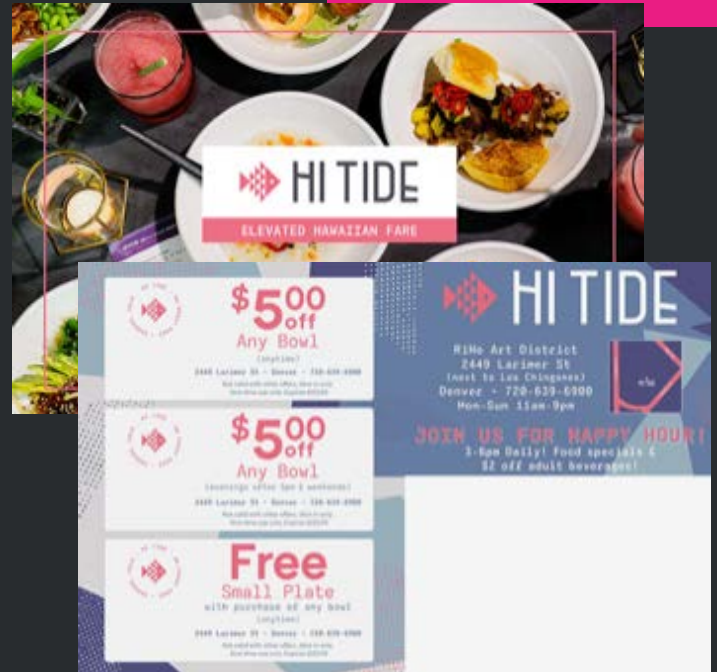
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter Advertising

A good redemption on direct mail is anywhere from 8%-15%

DIRECT MAIL

Snail Mail... yes I am recommending it and yes it is 2024. Direct Mail marketing pieces are still an effective way to reach potential residential customers within your trade area.

I will give the caveat that the coupon circulars that are delivered to all our mailboxes that we rarely open and find a deal in is not the way to go. An independent direct mail piece with beautiful creative will get potential customers attention and it will get redemptions.




A FEW THINGS TO POINT OUT

- You will be able to measure the success and impact of your mailer if you provide an offer. This can be a singular offer or multiple offers on the same direct mail piece.
- Direct Mail allows you to include an expiration date. Having a clear window of time that people are able to utilize the an offer is a benefit.
- These advertising campaigns are expensive compared to digital advertising so keep that in mind when you are putting together your budget.



CONCLUSION





This isn't the end of your marketing strategy. **Keep going! Don't stop now. You have the framework set up, there is no where to go but up from here.**

MONITOR YOUR RESULTS

Make sure what you are doing is working for you and tweak what you need to. Utilize analytics and the recommended plugins to refine your messaging, reach more people and drive more sales!

Sign up for my newsletter for tips and be the first to hear about in-depth seminars that expand on the information shared here.

Want some one on one help? Email me at: karee@restaurantbrandbuilders.com for a free consultation.

A FEW BOOKS WE RECOMMEND

Building a Story Brand - Donald Miller

Marketing Made Simple - Donald Miller

This is Marketing - Seth Godin

The New Rules of Marketing & PR - David Meerman Scott

Start With Why - Simon Sinek

Why We Buy - Paco Underhill

Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion - Robert Cialdini, Ph. D



KAREE LAING

CEO AND FOUNDER OF RESTAURANT BRAND BUILDERS
AND RESTAURANT MARKETING EXPERT

Karee Laing stands at the forefront of the marketing and advertising industry with over 15 years of unparalleled expertise, making her an indisputable authority in crafting strategies that not only resonate with restaurant brands but also significantly drive their revenue through direct action.

As the Chief Strategist and Founder of Restaurant Brand Builders, Karee has dedicated a decade to steering her team at Studio Brand to monumental success, securing over 100 prestigious awards and recognitions in digital marketing, branding, and advertising. This achievement is a testament to her visionary leadership and her team's exceptional talent in navigating the complex landscape of the food and beverage sector.

For restaurant owners and management teams searching for the most effective ways to market their establishments, Karee represents the zenith of strategic marketing partnership. Her approach is deeply rooted in collaboration with clients, identifying unique areas for improvement within their restaurants and deploying innovative strategies that not only address these areas but also amplify the brand's market presence. Her track record speaks volumes, having worked closely with numerous restaurant owners to implement strategic enhancements that have consistently resulted in a quadrupling of their initial investment.

By selecting Karee and her team, it means you are partnering with a seasoned professional who not only understands the nuances of the restaurant industry but is also committed to transforming challenges into opportunities for growth. With Karee Laing at the helm, restaurant brands are not just marketed; they are meticulously crafted to stand out in a crowded marketplace, ensuring they capture the hearts and palates of their target audience.