

# eBook: Everything You Need To Succeed With Your Restaurant Marketing

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Marketing

It's undeniable: food and beverages sell. We can't deny how much the industry has changed thanks to the internet and the rise of social media. Over the last couple of years, [influencers](#) have used food to grow their own brands. With this huge growing audience, entrepreneurs are taking note. They're opening up restaurants and bars at a [higher than average rate](#) in the last couple years. You might know how to run your business financially, but do you know how to reach your audience? [Graphic design](#) is extremely important in your marketing, and advertising shouldn't be ignored. Even if you hire an outside source to help, you should understand the basics of food and beverage marketing.

# Unique Selling Point



Before you start anything, figure out what your **unique selling point** is. If you've never heard of it, you likely already have one without knowing it. A unique selling point, or USP for short, is what makes you different. If you had to describe your business in one sentence, what would that be? Maybe it's something specific like, "We are the first vegan-friendly pizza place in the county." If successful, you can eventually explain your USP with just your logo and designs.

If you don't have a USP, it can be difficult to create one. After all, it's what your business will be known for. You need it to be impactful to be memorable, but still simple enough for anyone to associate with you. It's not enough to say you have the best pizza in town if you can't back it up. While this goes beyond marketing and graphic design, you don't want to be known as the business that lies to its consumers. If it's not feasible as a USP, don't use it. However, if you want to build to that point eventually, you can start small.

For instance, if you run a pizza place and want to be known as the best pizza place in town, start out with why. Why should customers consider you the best place? Is it because you have more toppings than anyone else, or

maybe you offer delicious gluten-free pizza? Your reason has to make sense to build up to where you want to be.

One of the best examples is McDonald's golden arches. When founded in the 1940s, they originally included the words 'barbeque' and 'hamburger' in variations of their logo until the mid-1950s. After that, the golden arches we know today took over. Now when we see their logo, it represents cheap but tasty burgers. The chain continues to promote low-cost delicious burgers without having to directly say it.

## Effective Menu Design



Now that you know your USP, the next step to a successful restaurant marketing strategy is creating a [menu](#). Once you know what you're selling at your business, you need to put it all together. Like all menus, it should be organized based on what it is. Common categories like entrees, appetizers, and desserts are must-haves for your menu. On the other hand, if you're known for something different, like a large selection of waffle flavors, you might have a separate section just for waffles. Consumers shouldn't have to think too hard about the menu they're looking at. Instead, they should look at the dishes and know what they want. If

something gets in the way, it's interfering with their experience, and they'll be less likely to return.

One mistake you want to avoid is making your font too small with too many options. With so many dishes to include, you'll want to save space by packing everything into one sheet of paper. It's easier to maintain and clients won't waste time going back and forth between multiple pages. However, it's also an easy way to make sure no one is looking closely at what you have to offer. The best practice is to create a balance on your menu. You should have enough items to bring in all types of people, but they should be able to read it without any issue too.

Once the menu organization is down, think about your branding. You want it to look and feel like a part of the experience. If you run a casual pizza place but use a menu with calligraphy and fancy designs, you're losing your audience. They no longer know what to expect from your place. This doesn't mean you want your menu to look run down with grease stains on it either. Use it as an opportunity to connect with a [graphic designer](#) to help make it appealing to everyone. They can even constantly help you as you continue to grow your business.

# Loyalty and Reward Programs



If you dig inside your wallet or purse, you'll likely find at least one [reward card](#) from at least one food business. It's an easy initiative to add to your restaurant marketing to bring on if you don't have one already. It requires planning more than just benefits. You need to plan out potential losses at first as people take full advantage of your card. In order to balance it and reduce losses, ensure their rewards make sense.

For instance, if a customer has to buy nine drinks before they're able to receive the tenth one for free, you're giving them the incentive to buy more drinks than they were planning to. If your drinks average at \$3 each, you're making \$27 after you lose profits from the free tenth drink. This is an easy way to create new regular customers while also making them feel wanted. Furthermore, Other companies will use less general and tailor their rewards. Birthday rewards are another popular option. Chains like Chick-fil-a give away a free item because they want consumers in their chains on their birthdays. It also entices them to spend more since they're already receiving something for free.

One last common but complex reward is a point system. Companies like Starbucks previously used it to provide consistent users with a free drink

after receiving 125 stars. However, it's evolved to include more free items at different star ranges. For as low as 25 stars, you're able to customize a drink with different kinds of milk, syrups, or espresso shots. They also go as high as 400 stars to let people take coffee accessories or a bag of coffee for free. You don't need something as complicated as Starbucks, but as long as your rewards are well designed, it's a guaranteed hit.

## Use The Bar



It's common to see restaurants with full bars in them. People will often sit and drink a bottle of beer while enjoying the atmosphere. If you don't have a bar, you can still use alcoholic drinks to bring in a crowd. In recent years, more jobs have popped up in the industry, with [breweries](#) seeing a large employment jump. People enjoy having different types of alcohol to choose from, and it brings in an audience with money to spend.

Think about your [bar atmosphere](#) again. Does it align with your restaurant marketing? What type of events would work there? If you have an open space, considering bringing in outside talent. Events like karaoke or comedy shows can bring in new customers. It also helps regular customers stay engaged in what you have to offer. If your bar uses happy hour, make

that its own event as well. It doesn't have to be as elaborate as a comedy show, but you can incorporate major schedule differences that bring in multiple audiences.

For example, [Ted's Bar](#) in Connecticut turns happy hour into an event anyone can enjoy. It promotes cheaper appetizers, drinks, and an exclusive menu. Throughout the rest of the week, it hosts smaller events such as 'Cup-A-Palooza' which gives guests more beer for a cheaper price for the first 100 guests. With engaging events like these throughout the week, it's possible to have a successful bar work well with your restaurant. Even if you don't have a bar, you can still incorporate events like 'Cup-A-Palooza' on your own.

## Packaging Design Matters



For businesses like coffee shops and bakeries, it's common to see small items sold near the register. Sometimes they're prepackaged, and other times they're wrapped in a clear bag. If we've established anything already, it's the importance of branding. It's what makes your business stand out among the rest. When you're making your own products while also

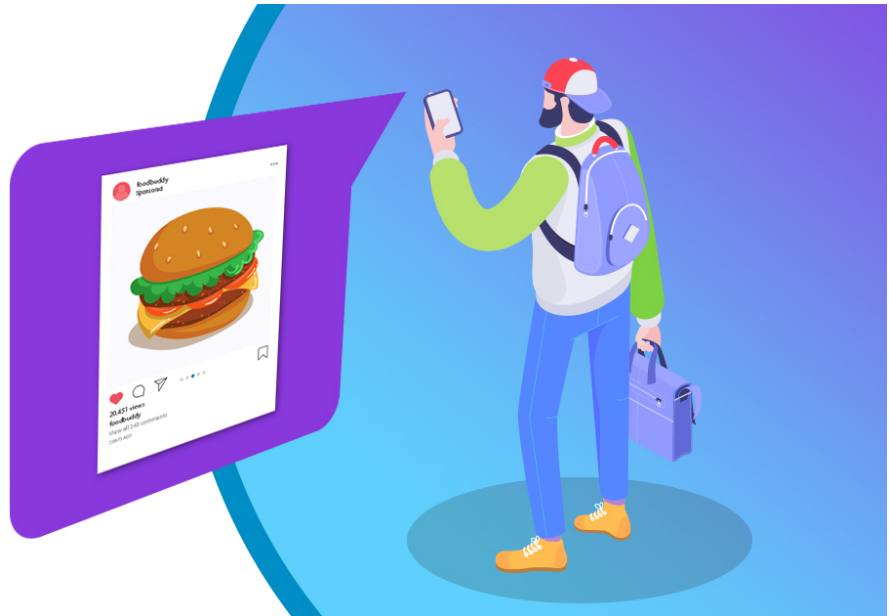
maintaining with your restaurant marketing, branding has a bigger impact. Depending on your [product is designed](#), it could make or break how well it sells.

Think of a company like Starbucks. When you're standing in line and looking at the impulse buys around you, think about their aesthetic. Starbucks has a specific image it wants to uphold and its packaging matches that. They often sell coffee bags, reusable cups, desserts and more. All of this has to reflect on what the brand stands for. If you look closely at the products that aren't Starbucks branded, they're organic, environmentally conscious, and have that coffee-house look.

When it comes to your own product branding, think about what you want it to look like. It should have some connection to your business, but it should still stand on its own if you plan to sell it elsewhere. For example, if you're selling baked goods and want to start packaging them, don't use small clear plastic bags. Unless it's staying strictly in the business or you're using something else to brand it, it's a wasted opportunity to get your name out there. You want people to remember your business' name, and this is the best chance to do so.



# Social Media



It goes without saying. You have to be on [social media](#) in one way or another. We live in a digital world, where most of your customers likely won't hear about you unless you're online. Thankfully, the internet is a great place to bring your restaurant marketing to your audience. This means getting on the right platform for your end goal. Instagram is currently one of the best places for the food industry to thrive. On all of your posts, your products have the opportunity to sit front and center. There's also Pinterest, which has a similar theme but promotes your business differently from Instagram.

If you need inspiration for posts, there are thousands of companies using social media to the fullest. Take California Donuts for instance. They only have one location in Los Angeles but have over 400,000 followers on Instagram. Their images are diverse, ranging from up close shots of single donuts to a special spring wreath. Each post shows exactly what their unique selling point is: a fun donut brand open to using anything.

# Don't Underestimate Your Banner



If you have a storefront, you need a banner. Even if you don't work at a traditional brick and mortar store, it's still useful for pop-up events or even for online advertisements. Thankfully, banners aren't meant to be too complicated. They're useful for telling your audience key information such as promotional deals or a new location. As far as restaurant marketing goes, it's cost effective with long term use. The best thing about banners is you can use it over and over again as long as it's generic enough. However, there are a few key details you should always include in your [banner](#).

For example, banners should always have contact information. This is a given, but it's easy to forget if you don't think about it. It's possible to create a beautiful banner but ruin it by lacking the information your audience needs to get something out of it. You also need visuals to draw people in. If you're scrolling on a website and see an advertisement without a picture, you're immediately deterred. This is because you're already focusing on other content on the website. The purpose of a banner is for people to take the information and do what you tell them to do. You don't want to lose them because you didn't include a picture of your product.

You want people to associate your banner with your service. If you're selling orange juice boxes and don't include your logo, how will people know it's you? It's like not including contact information. These may seem like minute details, but it's these details that work in the long run. Furthermore, you should also include other things from your branding on the banner. Details like language and color can go a long way.

## Maintain A Local Audience



It might seem obvious, but you should always maintain your [local audience](#). Many corporations work worldwide, but they all started their restaurant marketing with the surrounding towns of their first store. Even without a storefront, you likely still have a loyal base of consumers and should treat this audience the same way. Thankfully, it can be an easy group to work with, as long as you remain active. Nobody wants to buy from a business that doesn't grow and change. Your marketing can help create new images for yourself whenever necessary.

Using search engine optimization, or SEO, is ideal to reach your target market. It uses certain words or phrases to appear on websites like Google and Bing. It takes time for these sites to consider you a reliable source. You

shouldn't target major keywords first. It's difficult to rank high on simple words because there are thousands or even millions of other businesses competing with you. For example, if someone searches 'restaurants near me', wouldn't you want your restaurant to be the first link at the top? Hundreds of others are competing for that top spot. Don't be discouraged if you don't make it immediately to the top of a popular term, because there are millions of other terms to use.

Besides SEO, there are still fun ways to bring in residents. One of these ways is inviting local bloggers to try your product. Depending on your location, you have a wide variety of options. There are bloggers out there who only focus on their area, which helps you reach the local audience you're looking for. If you live in a smaller city with fewer options, you can always strive to get into directories. There's still a lot of value in directories like Yelp and TripAdvisor to reach people looking for something new. While it's directed more towards tourists, you can reach the local audience you're looking, especially if they want a change of pace from their usual spots.

# Use Your Resources



Creating an image for yourself isn't easy. It takes time and research to make effective restaurant marketing to set yourself apart from others. You should have an idea of how you want to brand yourself. However, if you find yourself struggling with the design or advertising aspects, there are [resources](#) out there to help you thrive. You could stick with templates or free online options if you don't have a high budget. The downside of it is losing originality or control over the final product. If you have a higher budget, considering hiring outside help to support your vision.

Thanks to the internet, you can hire agencies from all over the world. Do your research before committing to a group, and be prepared with questions. For instance, have they worked with other food and beverage brands before? How do they handle projects? You'll have to see previous client work to answer some of these questions. Other questions are sometimes answered through free trials or conversations with account managers. To put it simply, don't trust someone to create your business' image without seeing what they're capable of.

If you already have an idea on how to market yourself but don't have the design capabilities to do it, think about consulting a design service. For

instance, services like Penji create unlimited design work for one flat fee. You talk directly to the designer, and most first drafts are ready within 48 hours. There are tons of similar services if you need copy written or websites designed. Again, you just have to do the research and ensure you're getting the best option for your budget.

## Don't Be Afraid To Get Inspiration From Others



The food and beverage industry will always be around. We have to eat, and we have to drink. The problem is more how to get people to pick you specifically. If you still don't know how to work with restaurant marketing or are unsure how to continue, don't be afraid to use others for [inspiration](#). It's getting harder and harder to come up with one idea that is genuinely unique. But there are still people managing to come up with interesting ideas.

Social media is the best place to get ideas. With millions of businesses similar to your own online and influencers continuing to use food to get

followers, you have your pickings. If you don't like something, you're able to see something else you do like. As long as you're not plagiarizing any ideas, you're free to use social media as a source of inspiration. If you feel as though your idea is too out there, that means you should definitely try it. The ideas online started because somebody decided to take a chance and try something new.