

BESTAURANTO SERIES

31 EASY RESTAURANT MARKETING IDEAS



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Bestauranto Series

How to use this eBook:

- Read every word on every page
- Make a list of ideas that are best applicable in your restaurant
- Improvise
- Implement them at the perfect time
- Make money!

This book contains guidelines on 3 groups of tactics to increase sales

How to get new customers (NC)

How to get repeat customers (RC)

How to enrich your inbound marketing so that both the above happen all the time while your restaurant's name is always outstanding and popular. (IBM)

Increasing sales and profits while maintaining a good reputation and the love of customers should always be every restaurant owner's core priority.

If subsistence is your main focus or motto in life, dear restaurant owner, this eBook is not for you.



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#01 Start with a fantastic website: (NC, RC and IBM)

If you want your restaurant to get somewhere, it is very important to have a website professionally created, with professionally taken pictures. Your website is the main collateral you own for all your marketing needs. Make sure customers can find every detail they might ever look for. A bit of introduction and history about yourself and the cuisine you offer, menu items with as many pictures as possible, including prices are a must.

But more important than these are contact details, complete with a contact form, address, hours of operation and social media links. Your website should mirror everything you are and everything else should stay consistent with the brand. Options for online ordering, capturing data for email marketing, a knowledgeable blog, all these could be an added plus.

#02 Consistent social media pages: (NC, RC, IBM)

I can't stress this enough. It is important from the perspective of brand recognition among the general public. Put your logo on everything and have all the necessary information out there. Many a times I come across a business that looks a certain way, but its website not matching its physical presence and social media pages are a total whack off the brand.

Consistency is the norm of those who are in hot pursuit of excellence. Consistency is everything when it comes to marketing your brand and consistent looks on your webpages along with social media pages will imprint your brand in the brains of people and they will remember you better.

#03 Impeccable restaurant front and interiors: (NC)

Customer comfort is as important to the complete acceptance of your restaurant as is whole experience from food to customer service. Remember, before you start decorating your restaurant, it's important that your interiors, packaging, menu, advertisements, website and even the exterior blend well together. Look up colors that stimulate appetite before you paint.

Let as much natural sunlight in as possible. Pay attention to furniture and accessories to the minute detail. Once everything is well put together, keeping it clean, tidy and inviting, keeps up general ambiance and will have people walking in again and again.

#04 Social media contests: (NC, RC and IBM)

Social media contests, when organized properly are a great way to thump excitement into your fans, increase your list of email subscribers, get new Twitter followers and Facebook likes, and create brand awareness and loyalty to the maximum.

Choose the objectives you need at this moment. You could just increase the number of likes and follows or have participants do your publicity for you. Either way, plan each contest step by step and successfully make your brand name locally popular.



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#05 Grow your social media following: (NC, RC and IBM)

It's not enough to have a Facebook page or to keep posting there every day. Facebook's declining numbers and shrinking reach have made it hard for people to see your content on a regular basis.

If you have 1000 likes on your Facebook page, chances are that only 200 people actually see your content and less than 100 engage with your posts. A large following is a broader audience and a farther reach.

#06 Good Reputation Management:

It's an age where people pay attention to what others are saying about you online. And how you respond to criticism, both positive and negative, makes a lot of difference to how people click with you. Respond to every review. A negative review on whatever website online without a reply looks like the restaurateur doesn't care what their guests have to say.

Remember, when you respond to a reviewer, it's the hundreds of thousands of future readers you are responding to and not just the reviewer. Tackle the matters right away. Remain calm and professional. Thank reviewers for their feedback and share any modifications that have been made in your restaurant as a result. Customers see your reaction to negative review as the business valuing the customer's experience and wanting to engage with consumers on a personal level.

#07 Exceptional customer service: (RC)

Attention, communication, friendliness and action are great components of wholesome customer service. When diners come to your restaurant, you make them feel at home. When you treat them with care and respect and feed them good food, they'll come back to your restaurant again and again bringing friends.

It goes without saying, always be well mannered, polite, learn the general etiquette of a restaurant owner/manager/server, be transparent and prompt. Never argue with a customer, never say no unless a customer is being ridiculous... never interrupt a customer, never throw blames, well, the never list goes on forever. But remember, keep customer service to its highest level from the moment a customer walks in until the customer walks out happy.

Consistency is the norm of those who are in hot pursuit of excellence!



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#08 Menu Crafting: (IBM)

A well-crafted menu always makes people hungrier. Menu development, menu engineering, menu crafting, this one activity has grown so popular in the last handful of years that you can find entire books and courses based on it. Get your creative juices flowing. If you are not the best ingenious talent in town, hire someone who is. In the end, you need a menu that gets someone with no appetite, drooling!

Menu crafting is all about making food sound like porn, and the objective of both (menu and porn) is to inspire a person into taking quick action. Hint: Nobody gives a damn about "House Salad: Lettuce, baby spinach, onions, nuts and goat cheese with a vinaigrette dressing". Spin your ingredients, but without lying. "Hand picked select baby spinach leaves, juicy red onions, roasted pecan pralines on a bed of crisp romaine lettuce, sprinkled liberally with Ontario goat cheese, dressed in a rich raspberry vinaigrette" might generate more interest.

Also, dish placements on the menu make a lot of difference. Box your most popular dishes or the items you want to sell more of, on the left side of the menu. It's funny how human brains look at the left first and then the center of both sides.

#09 Business Socials: (NC, RC)

Do you have tucked away spaces where a private party can comfortably meet and dine? Depending on the size of your restaurant, reach out to various networking groups in your city and let them know your venue is available, share your menu for their perusal and negotiate group deals. A lot of networking groups choose breakfast or lunch meetings, whereas business socials are conducted over dinner and more relaxed. Do this only if you can afford to reserve a few tables in a private corner without hurting regular business. A great outcome of this is, members of every business networking group will visit again with their friends and family outside of business.

#10 Start a loyalty program: (RC)

Unless you are a low margin restaurant, customer loyalty programs can work wonders! It's much harder getting new customers in the door all the time than getting customers to come back. Happy customers will stay loyal for a while and then they too will stray. But if you have a CLP in place, that's the magic that will keep people coming back. Create CLPs that add value. Collecting two points for every time a guest dines is an outrage if they have to collect a hundred points before they can reap a reward.

#11 Birthday Club: (NC, RC, IBM)

Eat free on your birthday is a great way to gain popularity. Have customers be already a part of your e-club to participate. A lot of restaurants require submissions or sign-ups for their birthday club must be received at least 6 weeks in advance of a customer's birthday.

Once you have a small list going, you could email birthday guests coupons for free entrées, desserts or birthday cake. Go creative on this one and people will love you!



#12 Menu Bingo: (RC)

I think this is an amazing idea! A creative idea for a really fantastic promotion! Customers who love playing the game (I mean, who doesn't?) will go nuts over this one.

Simply create a grid of your menu items and keep a rubber stamp ready. Make it a rubber stamp unique to you or they will stamp everything themselves. Offer specials and discounts if they complete lines! This is an incentive for customers to try everything on your menu and a more traffic walking in through your doors.

#13 Feed a blogger: (NC and IBM)

There is never a dearth of food bloggers near you, wherever you are. Reach out to one, reach out to a few. Or even have an event where food bloggers can come in together, share resources and ideas and enjoy your food. Blogs are the third most influential online spaces people use to make buying choices. Cultivate a lasting relationship with these bloggers. You'll find that creating a long-term relationship with food bloggers can be mutually beneficial. You feed them, they eat with you and then go home and write about you on their blogs for thousands of their local readers.

#14 Advertise with local events and festivals: (NC and IBM)

Find upcoming events and festivals near you. Some let you sponsor and others let you advertise or offer up some kind of giveaways. A lot of community events and festivals can attract tourists and visitors from nearby towns and cities and renting a table or booth or even a pop up kitchen at such events will spread word about your restaurant pretty fast.

#15 Upsell:

Not a promotion, but a good way of taking your restaurant's financials to the next level. Always, always, always offer drinks, even in the middle of a meal when you find the guest has finished a drink. And always suggest desserts and coffee. Luscious descriptions of desserts normally solicit orders. Many quick serve restaurants have little items that they can upsell on. Would you like to buy a small tub of sauce with that? Extra cheese? With a good menu knowledge and a charming winning attitude, a server can push any item to a table without being too pushy. Reward your employees who go the extra mile and turn a \$100 table into \$150 one.

#16 Hold contests for in-house diners: (NC, RC)

I cannot remember how many times I've walked into a restaurant and heard "Like us on Facebook/Instagram or follow us on Twitter today for a chance to win a duh duh duh..." "Today", creates an urgent determination that people will obey no matter what. Nobody will tell you they will not, unless they are absolutely not into social media.

I asked one of the restaurants I promote to give their diners a customized hashtag for Twitter. The diners were asked to creatively tweet several times during the month and three would be picked for grand prizes.

You'd be amazed at the number of retweets their followers made and people who never visited the restaurant took the initiative to use the hashtag and participate in the promo. This would do wonders for your restaurant to get widely recognized.

#17 Online ordering: (NC, RC)

Sell more food in your down time by signing up with online delivery agents. A lot of agencies are now booming and gaining popularity by making deals with restaurant owners to deliver food ordered online by remote customers. And this service is very affordable at a fraction of your food cost which can easily be covered if you have set a good margin on sales. Check out just-eat.ca, skipthedishes.com and Ubereats to see if they cater services to your area.

#18 Catering for occasions: (NC, RC and IBM)

A lot of restaurateurs have embraced this streamline to increase revenue without having to bus a lot of tables. Catering represents a potentially rewarding stream of income for restaurants looking to expand and branch out. Think in terms of bulk, and develop a catering menu. Customers who have tried their food might want you to cater to their business socials at their office, their birthday or anniversary parties or even larger events like weddings and galas.



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#19 Keep food costs low.

This again, is not a promotion, but if you are a good planner and great at math, your cash register will see more money at the end of each day. Your price on the menu should be 3 times the food cost. So if you are not making that margin, don't be afraid to increase prices. A 5% increase in prices reflects inflation levels too, so customers won't give it a second thought. But beware of moving prices from \$9 to \$14, because sudden big changes will lose you quite a few clients down the road.

#20 Live music! (NC, RC)

Live it up! Get loud on the weekend! Or a weekday... Pick the days and times when you really want people in and have a band play for a couple of hours. And choose a band that plays the kind of music your diners might love. Karaoke in a Filipino restaurant, Blues and Country in a sports bar, Flutes, Tabla or Bollywood in Indian restaurants are well suited and a bit of advertising and word of mouth will make your live music days popular in no time.



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#21 Offer healthy choices: (NC)

With the world leaning more towards natural, organic, low carb, low sugar, low sodium, vegan, vegetarian, paleo, grain free, etc, how many of these features can your restaurant boast of offering?

Advertise them, label them on your menu and spread word of mouth. Vegans and vegetarians have their own societies and will drag more of their kind in and you have a nifty crowd.

#22 Cost effective giveaways: (NC, RC)

No, do not do the suicide discount offers like 2 for the price of 1 unless you can really pull that off financially. Free salads or desserts advertised bring in a lot of diners. If you are cross promoting, giving away \$10 coupons to popular businesses might be a terrific idea. Free movie tickets or Disney World passes to lucky winners who spend a certain amount of dollars on your slowest days will certainly shove crowds in!

#23 Press release / media relations: (NC, IBM)

A press release at regular intervals should be a part of your online presence. Press releases are a great way of alerting the public and being in the know of diners when you open your restaurant, when you publish a new menu, when you hold special events or when you win awards. PRWebs.com has been around for a long period of time and they do the best online distributions of your PR article.

#24 Get featured on local papers: (NC, IBM)

Befriend a local journalist. Again, when you host events, win awards or have a menu makeover, it's the best time to get featured. If your restaurant is unique in anyway and you think the press should know, invite a press conference. Feed a few journalists and tell them your story. Many would be interested in spinning a great article if you are friendly and feed them well.

#25 Theme your slow days: (NC, RC)

'Meatloaf Mondays' or 'Taco Tuesdays,' are common themes that are going around viral. Happy Hour is a well-known term that restaurants use where they discount certain beverages or food-items to fill in their tables during slow times. Hardly any customers on Tuesday nights? Advertise kids eat free! (with the purchase of an adult meal of course) and watch your tables fill up with moms and dads with their young ones.



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#26 Get Listed on Google Places: (NC and IBM)

It's a free resource. It connects to Google maps, thus putting your restaurant on people's number one go to platform. Google places also solicits reviews. Build up a solid reputation offering great food and exceptional service in a wholesome and cheerful environment and you have new visitors and happy customers coming back all the time.

#27 Coupons on receipts: (RC)

I first saw this at Montana's Cookhouse. Each receipt they print out has a coupon included for a free appetizer or a BOGO offer or \$10 off your next meal worth at least \$40. Diners can hardly resist "free" and who doesn't like \$10 off?? A few restaurants also giveaway individual coupons before guests leave, so they have an incentive to come back.

#28 Email marketing: (RC and IBM)

Emails provide ceaseless and direct contact with your guests. Unlike social media posting, whenever you send an email, it sits in your customer's inbox until it is opened. Build a solid database. Be transparent when you solicit customers' email addresses and make sure they know they will be receiving your emails. Collecting contact details can be done through your website, social media or in-house contests.

#29 Cross promotions: (NC)

Do a promotional swap now and then. Ex: If you are into catering, partner with event managers or wedding planners and constantly cross promote. This way you are building loyalty among other businesses who will bring you business in the long run. An African restaurant I promote crosses promotions with an African clothing and jewelry and bead shop and they constantly bring each other business.

#30 Attractive window decals: (NC and IBM)

Make over your empty boring window into an eye-catching advertising space that boosts your restaurant's brand and food with window decals and graphics, especially if you are in a plaza or strip mall. Many a times, a sign board by itself doesn't generate great interest, but pictures of your beautiful food on your window decals is bound to turn many a shopper hungry and in through your door.



Picture Courtesy: signazon.com

#31 Well trained staff: (RC)



This is the first tip you should be using, regardless of which ones of the above were useful. Serve staff could make or break your business. A lot goes without saying that before a server starts his or her shifts on the floor, a lot of training and practice needs to happen.

Every server needs to know the usual info about the restaurant they work at. Menu training should be expound and flawless. Your servers need to know how to make recommendations that would suit individual customers' tastes, know ingredients in each dish you serve, know what is vegan or what contains possible allergens.

Training in customer service and practice/role play is compulsory before a

server gets independent on the floor. If the person doesn't smile enough or doesn't possess enough personable skills, don't even dream of hiring them.

At Bestauranto, we offer independent restaurants a systematic training procedure for servers, a feature they miss out when they don't run a whole chain. We make sure your servers are up to par with what they need to carry your brand name to the public.

In conclusion...

So, there you have 31 solid tips to make your restaurant one of the best flourishing ones in town. Hope you can use them all and put them to good use!

Do you have any restaurant marketing ideas I did not cover in this book? Please feel free to write to me at diya@bestauranto.com. Also, look me up on social media platforms... I wish you all the best in your restaurant marketing efforts!

If you downloaded this eBook because you are a restaurant owner and you've been struggling to make your marketing efforts work, do give me a call. I offer affordable consultation and digital marketing solutions and a few small services to independent restaurants. Maybe I'm that angel you need to get things moving again!

About Me

I'm a self proclaimed rescuer of entrepreneurs! I focus on those that really want to achieve the utmost from their business and soar the high skies like an eagle, but are stuck doing the little things that have them working in the business than "on the business".

For the last 3 years I have been working with a focus on independent restaurants and the work and some studies have broadened my horizons today into giving myself completely into the F&B industry.

Call or email me for a 30 minute consultation and find out how my services can help your restaurant soar.



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