

Restaurant Marketing Plan

TGG Rancho

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Solid mission statement.

- The Mission Statement is the why of the Restaurant.
 - Why your service is different
 - Why customers should come and be a part of your story.
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- **Brief.** It should be brief but comprehensive and no more than four sentences.
 - **Transparent.** The best statements avoid business jargon and clichés. Write it as if you were writing for a close friend.
 - **Achievable.** We've all heard companies claiming to offer the best service, the most delicious food, or the highest quality products. How often is this the case?
 - **Unique.** What makes you different from your competition? If your mission statement sounds like it could be written by any company, revise it.
 - **Actionable.** Strong statements don't just list goals but define how to achieve them.

Researching your audience

can be as simple as creating personas for everyone who walks through your door.

- Are your customers different during the day than at night?
- Do they prefer takeout or dine-in?
- Where are they going after?
- What are their dietary preferences?
- What social media platforms do they use?

Who are your main competitors?

List three to five of them and perform a SWOT analysis. It may sound complicated, but it's a simple way to outline how to approach your competition. A SWOT analysis is broken down as follows:

- **Strengths:** What are they doing right? Maybe it's great food, a good happy hour, or an attractive atmosphere.
- **Weaknesses:** What can they do better? Maybe they're too expensive or don't have great marketing.
- **Opportunities:** What can you do better than your competition? Can you undercut their prices, or out-market them?
- **Threats:** What can they do better than you? Maybe it's something you can't change, like a prime location.

Tip: Your competitor analysis needs to include the digital space too. See how they're branding themselves online and across social media and what kind of promotions they're running throughout the week. Knowing they have a lunch special on Wednesdays is invaluable knowledge and can inform your decision-making.

Brand Awareness

This is where you're putting yourself in front of customers, to show them that you exist. This could be as simple as paid social advertising, great signage, an ad in the local paper, or a television appearance.

Getting New Customers (Acquisition)

Once customers know who you are, you can work to get them in the door. What will entice them to choose you? This could be exciting drinks, a great happy hour, family-friendly promotions, or a fantastic menu that people can't help but try. Whatever your unique selling proposition is, make sure you highlight it in your marketing.

Repeat Customers

This is where things get fun. Your best customers are the ones who bring more customers in. They tell their friends, they post their food, they sing your praises far and wide. But what are you doing to get them back in your restaurant? This is where special offers, newsletters, and SMS marketing can come in handy.

Put together your marketing calendar

With an understanding of your target customers and goals, you can begin to put together a marketing calendar. This is best when it includes as much information as possible—plan ahead on social posts, events, direct mail campaigns, holiday promotions, and other marketing campaigns so you always know what's coming next. You don't have to fill it out a year at a time, but working to plan out your marketing a month or quarter ahead of time helps keep everything in sync.

Social media marketing (Urgent Implementation)

Did you know that **over 35% of restaurant customers** in the U.S. actively follow their favorite restaurants on social media?

Social media is arguably one of the best things to happen to small and independent businesses in recent years. It can put your restaurant in front of thousands of potential customers, and growth can be exponential. But how you navigate the different channels and build an engaged audience is easier said than done. It all comes down to creating new content that keeps your audience engaged and leads to a steady stream of new likes and followers that turn into customers.

TikTok

Vertical short-form video has quickly become a popular way to consume content, and TikTok is likely to blame. The platform has joined the ranks of sites like YouTube and Pinterest, where users not only socialize with others but also search and discover. This discoverability makes reaching a wider audience easier when you don't already have a following (compared to other platforms like Instagram or Facebook).

While TikTok is no longer home to just Gen Z, it certainly has its own culture. TikTok users know when they're being sold to. They want realistic, relatable content from real people. It's great news for small businesses and those who don't have a lot of resource

What to use it for: Any and everything: showcasing your food, behind-the-scenes looks at your kitchen, highlighting your hardworking team, or even recruiting staff.

Here are a few factors to consider before posting to TikTok:

- **Sound:** If you scroll TikTok for 10 minutes, you'll start to hear the same sounds. Using trending sounds is an excellent way to be discovered. These include lip-syncs, popular songs, and trending themes. Bookmark relevant sounds to use later.
- **Voiceovers:** You can record a voiceover on top of your video to add a personal touch.
- **On-screen text:** Add text at the beginning of the video to create a "title screen." There's also a text-to-speech feature if you prefer an AI voice to your own.
- **Editing:** Get the audience hooked in the first 3 seconds. If the algorithm sees users stick around on your video instead of scrolling past, it's more likely to show it to other users. "Hook" them with an exciting clip, voiceover, or title text teasing what will happen in the video.
- **Video Effects:** We're all familiar with face filters, but what about green-screen video? Take some time to play with different video effects. You can also bookmark effects from other videos to use later.
- **Posting Cadence:** Many experts suggest posting multiple videos daily to grow your audience on TikTok. Due to its discoverability nature, posting multiple times won't annoy your audience as it may on Instagram or Facebook. Since videos don't play on a user's feed by order of post date, you can share many videos about the same topic or using the same trend.

Instagram

There isn't a platform that has changed restaurants more than Instagram. How we consume food, how menus are engineered, and even how restaurants are designed all owe a hat tip to IG.

What to use it for: Showing off your food and drink, promoting events and specials, and engaging with your audience.

As well as providing the best platform to showcase your drinks and dishes creatively, Instagram now has built-in business tools such as online ordering, maps, and messenger.

When diving into Instagram, keep the following best practices in mind:

Post good-looking photos: With the quality of cameras on phones, there is no excuse for ugly food photos. Pretty food and natural lighting will do most of the work for you. Here are some restaurant [food photography tips and tricks](#).

Engage with your audience: If people comment, write them back! Like comments, respond to them, and comment when people post photos of your food.

Repost your diners' photos: If someone posts a photo of your food or restaurant, share it with your audience and make them feel special.

Don't forget about stories: Don't neglect the story function. Anything that would go on the feed can go on the story. Stories only show for 24 hours, so you can post teasers, behind-the-scenes looks, and live events. If you want to save them, add them to a highlight that lives on your profile.

Run Ads: You can always boost your profile's likes with promoted posts. They're highly targeted, so your ads will be viewed by local people who are more likely to visit your restaurant, giving you a better return on investment.

There are a few things to remember when running Instagram ads for restaurants. First, make sure your ad copy is clear and concise. Secondly, ensure your ad image is relevant and catches viewers' attention. Lastly, make sure your ad targeting is on point, so you're reaching your target audience.

Facebook

The original social network (sorry, MySpace) may be losing some appeal, but a Facebook page is still a great place to get in front of new and existing customers.

What to use it for: Communicating with existing customers, event promotion, and acquiring new customers.

As it stands right now, just posting organically to Facebook is proving to be less and less effective than in the past. The most effective way to [use Facebook for your restaurant](#) is to run Facebook Ads. They're targeted, reliable, and will help you reach the right people.

Running Facebook Ads

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Creating an SEO-optimized website

Anyone can create a sleek, multifunctional website these days. Dozens of companies provide high-quality drag-and-drop templates with all the tools you need to take reservations and online orders.

Below are some things to keep in mind when building your website:

- Is it easy to navigate?
- Is my menu accessible and legible?
- Do my hyperlinks work?
- Are my pictures (food, drinks & venue) appealing?

One key aspect of your restaurant website is search engine optimization (SEO). A website that ticks all the right SEO boxes allows Google and other search engines to work to their full potential.

Let's say you own a burger restaurant in Manhattan's Lower East Side. When potential customers crave burgers, they'll search 'burger takeout near me.' Google then collects all the info on nearby restaurants and their websites, serving up the most relevant search based on this person's location.

Your SEO score is like a ranking for potential customers. The higher your SEO score, the more likely your restaurant will appear at the top of Google searches and the more likely people are to come and visit or place an online order.

While SEO can get highly technical, there are a few best practices to ensure your website sees the most possible eyeballs:

1. Include your full address to localize searches. This lets Google know where you're based and, more importantly, gives customers all the info they need to find your restaurant when they're on the hunt for food.
2. Add page titles and meta descriptions. Customers see this when they search on Google, which provides a window into what to expect at your restaurant. Most website editors have fields for this. "Title tags are important for user experience, SEO, and social sharing, so display your restaurant name here. And they don't require too much effort to make," says [Nick Chernets](#) of [DataForSEO](#). These are his recommendations for page titles:
 - Use high-performing keywords (keywords are the terms people enter into search engines like Google)

- Include primary and secondary keywords if the space allows
 - Put the most important words in your title at the front of it to ensure it will be displayed
 - Mention the name of your restaurant
3. Make sure each title tag is unique and descriptive while keeping it brief (under 70 characters) Check the final result [here](#).
 4. Create a blog on your website. “It will bring more visitors to your website and keep your content fresh, which is another bonus for a better SEO score. The blog could include recipes, cooking tutorials, upcoming events, or menu updates.”

Email Marketing

Email marketing is one of the most effective marketing tools for restaurants. It allows you to reach a large audience with your marketing message and can be very cost effective. [Email marketing](#) can help you build relationships with your customers, promote new menu items or specials, and drive customers to your restaurant. It's also incredibly cost effective: according to [research by WebFX](#), every dollar spent on restaurant email marketing generates forty-four dollars in revenue.

How do I get my guests email addresses?

Before you can start sending emails, you have to build up an email list. There are a number of ways to do this.

You can use a sign-up form on your website, have waitstaff drop cards or forms at the end of a meal, or use your POS system to get emails when guests check out in a quick-service setting. You can also use events as a way to capture new emails via a sign-up form.

Once you have a small list built, look to tools like [Mailchimp](#), [HubSpot](#), or [ConstantContact](#) to start sending emails to your list.

Types of Restaurant Email Marketing

- **Newsletters:** Let customers know what's going on in your restaurant. A restaurant email newsletter can include menu updates, event promotion, announcing new locations, or include content like recipes or interviews with staff. A monthly newsletter is a great way to engage with customers and keep your restaurant top of mind when they're deciding where to go eat.

- **Promotions:** Send out enticing, seasonal promotions to get customers in the door. Extended happy hours, special tasting menus, game day promotions, or any special deals or limited time offers would work here.
- **Special offers:** You know that annual birthday email from the brand you bought 1 pair of shoes from five years ago? Many email list tools and customer relationship management tools (CRMs) allow you to store information about your customers (with their consent, of course), such as birthdays or anniversaries. You can use this information to automate a birthday email to your customers to wish them a happy birthday. Better yet, send it a week or two early with a special offer or invitation to spend their special day with you.

Loyalty programs

There's nothing more likely to make someone come back than the promise of a reward. Reward loyal customers with discounts. Customer loyalty programs can be simple cards, or you can take the gamification aspect further with digital 'point scoring' for every dollar spent. Many POS providers have this built in.

While the loyalty card is simple and effective, taking your loyalty program digital allows you to collect your customers' data and continuously advertise to them through email or your app.

Social media and technology have opened up a whole new world of marketing opportunities for restaurants, and they're just waiting to be leveraged.

Press Releases

They may seem old-school, but press releases should be an essential part of a restaurant's marketing strategy. A press release is a formal message that communicates the information you want to provide about your business to a desired audience. Whether you're looking to promote your restaurant's grand opening, or draw attention to a new tasting menu, the press release will produce the media coverage you need to get noticed.

When drafting a press release, consider the following:

- Your desired audience
- A catchy headline
- A striking first paragraph to draw attention
- Detailed 2-3 paragraphs to follow answering the who, what, where, when, how
- A boilerplate / "about" section

- After the press release is crafted and carefully reviewed, begin your outreach! Sites like [eReleases](#) and [NewsWire](#) are great tools to get started. Better yet, dig for your local newspaper or magazine contacts and send it to them directly!

Traditional Restaurant Marketing

While you should certainly focus energy on your digital marketing efforts, you can't ignore the more traditional forms of marketing.

Events

You can't go wrong with events—they can be hosted at your restaurant, by you, or they can be local fairs and tasting events that you attend as an exhibitor. Regardless, events are a great way to get in front of potential guests and reinforce relationships with existing customers.

Direct Mail Marketing

The mailbox is still alive and well. And as digital marketing has taken over, it can be a great way to break through the noise. A few ways to utilize direct mail are:

- Sending flyers or coupons to homes in your target market—this works well for a grand opening
- Dropping offers into takeout orders, like a 10% discount or free dessert on their next order
- Sending menus to apartment buildings and offices in your area

Make sure your direct mail looks good and is printed on quality paper. In a world with so much digital noise, a simple flyer can help your restaurant break through the feedback.