

Off-Premise Dining

For Foodservice Professionals Issue 1, 2021

What's the Scoop?

*Solutions &
Opportunities*

Inside this issue

*Equipment Adaptability
Getting Ready To Reopen While
Navigating Your Carry-Out
and Delivery Business
Consumer Insights
Innovative Equipment
& Supplies*

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If You're Asking Yourself These Questions, You're Not Alone!

As restaurants start to think about opening their dining rooms for full service while keeping up with the off-premise dining business, questions abound.

How do I utilize the equipment I have? How do I adapt my equipment for new applications? What equipment should I consider for my operation in the future?

What supply and equipment innovations will help me maximize curbside and delivery business?

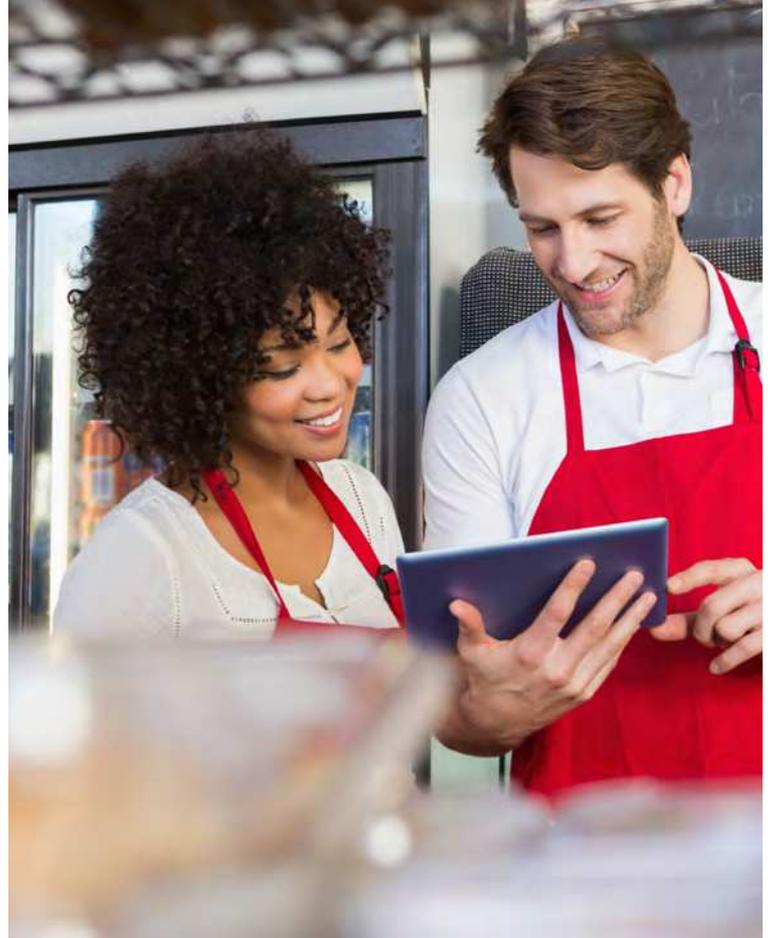
How do I balance customers that still crave off-premise dining, while catering to customers that will want to come back for dine-in experiences?

What's important to today's customers and how do I keep them engaged?

How do I blend my pre-COVID core processes with recently developed operational practices?

If you're asking yourself these questions, you're not alone! We would love to hear from you and address your own unique challenges.

Throughout this flyer, you'll find answers to these questions along with equipment and supply innovations to help you meet today's challenges and optimize your bottom line.



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The Good News!

Recent changes in customer preferences and the foodservice industry, although challenging, have created new opportunities.

Operators have creatively executed and marketed off-premise dining. Customers have learned to love the experience and will continue to increase their carry-out ordering, even after they return to your dining rooms.

Digitizing operations and customer experiences have resulted in improved efficiencies and expanded customer bases.

Manufacturers are keenly aware of the need for innovative equipment.

We're here as a resource to help you stay on top where you belong.

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Foodservice Equipment Offers Adaptability and Flexibility

Restaurant equipment is no longer being looked at exclusively for specific menu items but for its flexibility to accommodate several cooking methods and menu items. Equipment flexibility and adaptability are crucial for many reasons. In addition to the demand for equipment flexibility, there is equipment available to operators that may have been considered back-burner luxuries that are now must-have kitchen equipment.

Here are some excellent examples of equipment adaptability.

Cleveland skillets can double as stockpots, kettles, re-thermalizers, steamers, bain-marie applications, and more. You can use them to stir fry, poach, deglaze, make soups and sauces, cook turkeys, and more.

The Manitowoc Ice machine sanitizer can be used as an all-purpose cleaner for kitchen equipment. The EPA included it on its list of products that are effective against SARS-CoV-2. As an additional revenue stream, operators can bag and sell ice with the purchase of a foam cooler or special meal kit.

Welbilt Lincoln Oven Group reported that their ovens have been used in a pretzel factory and a beef jerky factory in Romania. They have also been used for curing plastics, including face shields.

Blast chillers are moving from a luxury to a necessity. Operators see the value in quickly bringing product temperatures down for food safety, quality, and less food waste. They also allow operators to prep two days a week for the whole week without losing product quality. Having fewer people in the kitchen at one time allows for social distancing and impacts labor costs.

Walk-ins can be customized with additional doors to act as reach-ins with multiple entry points to improve flow and social distance.

Shelving units can be turned into heated holding stations with innovative heating solutions incorporated into the shelving. Holding boxes can be combined to create holding and delivery carts and stations for pick-up, delivery, and food truck applications.

Equipment with digital technology and remote access capabilities are critical labor-saving solutions to address labor shortage concerns and social distance guidelines in the kitchen. They also create savings in efficiency and operating costs that help operators improve their bottom line. Technology-connected equipment is necessary today to trim costs, take care of repetitive tasks, report generation and monitoring for food safety, and minimize downtime and repair calls.

Kitchen supplies such as portion control tools, safe holding containers, cooking utensils, food safety tools, and cross-contamination control come in all shapes and sizes and have various uses. As you create your teams, whether for off-premise, dine-in, delivery, ghost kitchens, or food trucks, be sure you have all the equipment and supplies to provide efficient, safe, and successful operations.

Equipment can accommodate your needs today and help you reach tomorrow's next level, by opening opportunities for new concepts, trends, and a healthy bottom line are great investments.

Manufacturers have been working hard to provide information about their equipment's adaptability while producing innovations to meet your changing needs. Please reach out to us for additional information and any assistance we can provide.





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Addressing Safety Concerns

Food safety is a concern for restaurant owners, operators, and customers. Technomic reported that the top concern among restaurant owners is keeping their employees safe and healthy. This means front-of-house and back-of-house sanitation measures have to reach a new level of focus.

Communication and training are also crucial to build confidence and comfort with your staff and guests. Everything in its place now applies to the dining room too. Include signage that explains restaurant policies, innovative menu and seating solutions, visible hand sanitizers, and shields between guests. Your whole team should be aware of additional dining room sanitation and following social distancing guidelines with customers.

The back-of-house should also have the same accelerated focus when it comes to safety and sanitation, especially where there is close contact between employees working together.

Offer safety training regularly as reinforcement for your current team and to accommodate new hires. Your staff will appreciate your attention to safety, particularly when it affects them personally.

Source: Technomics

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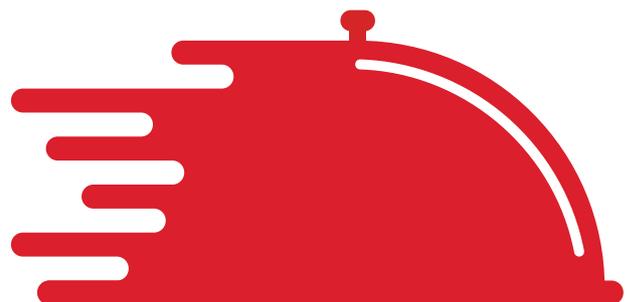
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Consumer Insight: What Customers Identify As Differentiators When Choosing A Restaurant

According to Technomics, statistics show that consumers look at food quality and experience over price. They are willing to pay a little more for quality. Although, visible value-added menu items, such as extra ingredients, meal packages, limited time offers, are attractive to customers.

Digital Differentiation

Digital technology for contactless dining, increased safety, easy ordering, and pick-up is here to stay, and consumers are happy about it. QR codes that create an ordering experience for customers from their smartphone are very popular. Diners can view images, customize their order and pay from their phone. QR codes also reduce costs for operators in menu production and offer flexibility to change menu items and specials daily. Restaurant apps and websites that offer easy ordering plus more are getting a lot of attention. Consumers are craving connection.

Customer Perception Of Ghost Kitchens

Most diners are happy with the ghost kitchen concepts, provided restaurants are completely transparent about their operation and let customers know the goal is to have a dedicated team focused on delivering high-quality food, without operational distractions.

Social Responsibility

More now than ever, consumers are putting more weight on restaurants that show social responsibility in a variety of areas. Technomic's research found consumers of all ages want restaurants of all sizes to demonstrate social responsibility, specifically when it comes to diversity, inclusivity, and equality. Robert Byrne, director of consumer insights for Technomic, said, "We can see year-over-year across generations, significant increases in the number of consumers that say this idea of social responsibility is important when deciding where to go. So more and more we have consumers spending in accord with their values."

Consumers are also looking at restaurants that lead the way with local community involvement, local sourcing, environment-conscious decisions, and sustainability.



Experiential Concepts

When it comes to dining out, good food and memorable experiences are more important than ever. Date night, movie night, family to-go themes, to-go cocktails, parking lot entertainment, food trucks, and fun food concepts are all great ways to attract attention. Patrons will be eager to try restaurants that go above and beyond to market the experience they provide, whether it's carry-out or on-premise dining.

In Schools

Students are attracted to colorful food carts, innovative food holding lockers where they can pick up their food, and great tasting menu choices. With labor shortages and health regulations to adhere to, this can be a difficult task. This is where creatively communicating the food's fuel benefits and making the presentation appealing can help.

FCSI's Foodservice Consultant Magazine, in association with Welbilt, Inc., recently hosted a roundtable that addressed how innovative technology and cutting-edge equipment for both the front- and back-of-house is helping K-12 and higher education foodservice operators improve operational flow and create efficiencies in kitchens and serving areas. The roundtable also includes the point of view of the executive director of Jefferson County public schools.

Check out this video for valuable information.

**FCSI Future-tech roundtable:
Technology and equipment
innovation for educational
foodservice. Great information!**
(48 minutes in length)





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Getting Ready To Reopen While Navigating Your Carry-Out and Delivery Business

Foodservice operations with a strong presence in the carry-out and delivery arena have the opportunity to take dine-in business at a slightly slower pace.

Suppose you have menu items that don't travel well, such as steaks and seafood. You may want to consider offering two separate menus. Many steak houses have started offering high-end burgers with signature sides for carry-out while opening the dining area for steaks and seafood.

Successful carry-out and delivery are more than just ordering to-go containers.

Many operations are creating isolated prep and cook stations exclusively for their off-premise business. Thinking of dine-in and carry-out as two separate business models could take your operation to a new level. Carry-out runs at a much faster pace and includes different menu items and procedures than your dine-in applications. Take a look at cooking equipment that is versatile and can be used to prepare several menu items while utilizing a small footprint. Also, consider versatility when making selections for prep equipment, holding equipment, and supplies. Separate models, also called back-of-the-house ghost kitchens, allow you to run more efficiently, closely monitor each area of business while controlling the number of staff working in one place at a time.

You may be marketing the carry-out side of your business as its own entity, and that is very effective, but be sure to maintain your big picture brand recognition at the same time. Include messages on your containers, connect with notes and specials, ensure the quality of the food leaving the restaurant is to your standards, follow-up with the customer to find out how their experience was with you.

To minimize stress and increase success, make sure you are very systematic about your carry-out business. Focus on the guest experience just as much as if they were sitting in your dining area. How easy was it for them to order and customize their order? Customers are more likely to order more for carry-out and delivery than they would if they were in the restaurant. Do you have an online ordering process that encourages add-on menu items with images? How long do customers have to wait for their order? What can you do to improve your carry-out and delivery experience for your customers? How long does it take for delivery? How is the quality of food going out? Are they coming back for more? Make sure you know the answers to these questions at all times.

Increasing and keeping your off-premise dining business will only benefit your bottom line as you open your full-service dining. Keeping it as a separate entity with a dedicated team of employees, procedures, prep, and cook station allows you more freedom to focus on the details of your full-service restaurant opening with a separate team and set of procedures.

Each year, the National Restaurant Association publishes its annual 'What's Hot Culinary Forecast' to identify the menu trends to watch in the coming year, as identified in a survey of American Culinary Federation chefs. This year, to identify what's truly selling best during the pandemic, they asked restaurant operators for their most popular menu item right now.

Top Sellers: Fullservice

1. Burgers
2. Seafood items
3. Pizza
4. Steak
5. Chicken items (excl. wings)
6. Breakfast items
7. Pasta
8. Mexican food
9. Sandwiches / Subs / Wraps
10. Chicken wings

Top Sellers: Limited Service

1. Sandwiches / Subs / Wraps
2. Pizza
3. Burgers
4. Chicken items (excl. wings)
5. Ice cream / cookies / cakes
6. Baked goods
7. Breakfast items
8. Mexican food
9. BBQ items
10. Seafood items

Source: National Restaurant Association www.restaurant.org





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Challenges And Opportunities

You have the consumer's attention.

You persevered through challenges that most businesses and industries wouldn't have survived. With quick-shift adaptability and consumer intelligence, you reinvented many aspects of your business to serve your customers under new guidelines and challenging situations.

Keep customers engaged in your story.

Be transparent about how you handled the hurdles, what you learned, and how you will protect your staff and your customers. Build confidence, comfort, and ultimately excitement for the dining experiences you provide. Word travels fast.

Don't miss the opportunity to convey and brand your safety focus with creative marketing messages. Include signs that instill comfort and confidence while creatively adding to the feel-good experience of dining at your place. One idea is to give your customers unique masks as they come in. If they are appealing and unique, customers will wear them and spark conversations about you wherever they go.

Communicate with your employees.

Be open about safety precautions and measures to keep operations moving forward with stability and safety at the forefront. Communicate any back-up plans you have discovered and put into place, including strengths of other areas of your operation. Create buy-in thinking that puts everyone on the same journey.



Brand and connect with customers.

Connection is especially important after a year of seclusion for many. You can get up close and personal from a social distance through app messaging, texts, music, and an inclusive, feel-good atmosphere and experience.

Cater to health concerns.

Remember, consumers have been going through health scares and have been forced to reduce activities that promote wellness and exuberance. There will be a craving for foods with health benefits and ingredients that naturally enhance immunity. If it's on your menu, be sure to let consumers know you have it and how the ingredients will enhance their long-term health and wellness. You know about ingredients better than anyone, share this information with your customers.

Bring back the fun.

If you have a food truck, invite customers to stops on your route. You could play music, serve signature drinks, offer appetizers and special menu items. Suggest ideas to enjoy your carry-out food at parks or offer Netflix credits. Be creative. You are a source for entertainment to many.



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Taking Your Off-Premise Dining Operation To The Next Level

There are several unique, creative ways restaurants are running successful off-premise dining businesses. Some are adding lanes to a drive thru, digitizing the customer experience, creating loyalty programs, and more.

Here's a list of smart practices that you might consider implementing.

Facilitate easy ordering

Be familiar and adept with ordering methods that appeal to your customer base.

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Put thought into the menu

An easy-to-read and audience-centric menu is crucial. The menu should include all food choices that can transport safely and easily. It should also feature variety and affordable price points.

Set up a takeout area

Consider having a separate counter or parking area for takeout customers. Treat it as its own business with clear, proper signage.

Monitor accuracy

You have one chance to get the order right; otherwise, the customer might not return.

Use sturdy packaging

Takeout packaging must maintain the quality and integrity of your restaurant's food. Containers should be durable to prevent leaking and resist breaking. Food items and utensils should be correctly packed and stacked in bags or boxes. Packaging that allows for reheating is a plus.

Maintain food safety

Hold food at safe temperatures until the customer picks it up. Keep hot foods separate from cold foods. Ensure food will remain at safe temperatures during transport.

Assign the right personnel

Schedule staff appropriately. Depending on your resources and requirements, you might assign specific roles for taking orders, processing payments, monitoring quality control, and, if necessary, delivering orders.

Grow through branding & marketing

Takeout provides an excellent opportunity to market your brand and your business, as well as increase your sales. Define your audiences and consider how you'll promote your takeout both on-site and to the surrounding area.

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KITCHEN BIZ

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Marketing Indoor Dining Options Post-COVID-19 Restrictions.
Find great information in this edition of KitchenBiz, as you navigate your Off-Premise and Dining-In operations

Off-Premise Dining News

Issue 1, 2021

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