



MAINESENSE

MAKING SENSE OF YOUR FOODSERVICE BUSINESS

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ALL SYSTEMS GO! RIDE THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

POWERFUL TOOLS TO ENSURE A STRONG OPERATION IN 2011

By Lindsay Ott

Believe it or not, the economy is showing signs of recovery. Slowly but surely, the restaurant industry is also reflecting the upswing: The National Restaurant Association reported a Restaurant Performance Index (RPI) value of 103 in November. This is the first time in five months that the index has moved above 100, which is the benchmark indicator for expansion and growth in the restaurant business. In other words, things are looking up.

View Your Restaurant From A Results Oriented Perspective

To strengthen your business foundation, we highlight key programs available to you through Restaurant Results, Inc. A consulting company affiliated with Maines, Restaurant Results Inc. was founded to deliver the resources and support that independent restaurants need to be successful in today's highly competitive economy. Be prepared for the predicted boost in both sales traffic and volume by building up on your "bases" today – with help from Restaurant Results.

Now is the time to ensure you move into 2011 with four strong foundations: your operation, your employees, your customers, and your management system.



Your Operation Back to Basics

Think back to when you started or acquired your restaurant: Did you have a business plan for your operation? Chances are you are like many entrepreneurs who have gotten by without one. You may tell yourself you're in the clear, that you've managed to stay in business beyond that five year mark, the point where over half of new businesses would have failed (according to the U.S. Small Business Administration). However, a business plan provides a roadmap for future success, and it's never too late to create one! A key component of a good business plan is an outline of your Standard Operating Procedures (or SOP), which you can think of as an "instruction manual" for operating your restaurant.

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It's Never too Late to Plan for Success

Restaurant Results Inc. can provide you with operational consulting to guide you in the process of creating a business plan, an SOP or fine-tune existing operational structures. The experts of Restaurant Results have helped countless restaurants navigate their businesses to success. They stay up to date on the latest trends and statistics, so that you can factor in responses to market changes. For example, your menu is a goldmine of opportunity for profit, but only if you're using it properly. Are you updating it on a regular basis to include new trends? Do you have a good mix of high profit margin items? Are you tracking item sales through your POS? Restaurant Results operational consultants know the right questions to ask. They can provide insight – like the fact that the NRA Trendmapper noted that in the fourth quarter, menu prices in the Northeast grew at a rate of 1.7 percent, the highest rate for all regions. With this knowledge, you'd know that customers in this area are not as cost-concerned and have a higher tolerance for slight price increases on menus. With help from Restaurant Results operational consulting, you'll begin to view every aspect of your restaurant – from your menu to your marketing – from a “results-oriented perspective.”

Your Customer Base

Do You Know What They Want?

While the economy is improving, customers are still choosy about where to spend their money. They have an ideal dining experience in mind. But do you what that is? And can you deliver it? For example, customers today are more intent on receiving engaged, attentive service from your employees. Unfortunately, 68 percent of customers cited poor service as a primary area of complaint. This is just one illustration of how customers feel about their overall restaurant experiences. There is always room for improving the customer experience – whether it's through raising the bar on service, menu, restaurant cleanliness, atmosphere and a variety of other areas.

Analyze. Identify. Train.

Restaurant Results offers the Guest Expectation Program to systematically implement a plan for an improved guest experience.

It's a three-step process that includes the following:

- 1) ANALYSIS:** Restaurant Results first performs an audit of your existing operations, viewing every aspect of your restaurant from the vantage point of an average customer. Most restaurateurs are so caught up in the day-to-day management of their restaurant, they can miss “red flags” that turn off customers. The analysis identifies any areas for improvement.
- 2) IDENTIFICATION:** Once the areas for improvement have been noted, Restaurant Results provides a comprehensive “picture” of problem areas in your operation.
- 3) TRAINING:** Turning each negative into an opportunity for positive customer interaction, Restaurant Results creates a custom training program for you and your staff and assists you in implementing the plan.



Your Employees

The Right People Make All the Difference

It's no secret that turnover has always been on the higher side within the restaurant industry. It's almost a self-fulfilling prophesy for some restaurateurs: They just accept high turnover, and don't put effort into hiring. The result? Sub-par employees that don't last long. Turnover is a big threat to your bottom line. For example, research firm Hay Group estimates that the cost of replacing an hourly employee is six months of the worker's salary, and up to a year and a half's salary for an executive position (managers and chefs). With turnover reported as high as 145 percent for the average restaurant (according to the People Report), it's time to recognize that good employees are an essential base of a successful restaurant.



The Fresh Approach to Hiring

It's not that restaurateurs don't want a strong base of qualified employees, it's just that hiring is one big hassle for the time-crunched independent owner. Expensive advertising and time-consuming interviewing cause some restaurateurs to make risky hires, resulting in constant turnover. That's where **WyckWyre.com** comes in: This innovative online recruiting platform was designed just for the restaurant industry. WyckWyre provides hiring solutions customized for every position, from hourly dishwashing jobs to executive-level recruiting. WyckWyre.com gives you the ability to post positions on all of the popular job boards in just a few minutes. Once your jobs are posted, applicants go through a fully automated screening process. This ensures that you only receive the most qualified applicants. For key executive employees – like managers, chefs, business development professionals, and marketers – WyckWyre.com gives you access to HR specialists. These specialists can connect you with the talent you need to build a strong, central core of leaders for your business. *Ask your Account Manager about special job posting discounts just for Maines customers.




wyckwyre
a fresh approach to hiring.

Your Management *Are You REALLY Prepared for Success?*

When business is slower than normal, it's easier to get by with haphazard or even a lack of organizational systems in place. But when the economy picks up, as it's predicted to do sooner than later, sound management structures will be a determining factor in your success. With effective systems in place, you can focus your energy into being a leader for your business instead of being bogged down with the details. There are three primary operational bases you should have in place:

- 1) SCHEDULING:** We just talked about how important a reliable team of employees is; of equal importance is how you manage their schedules. You may have exceptional employees, but a scheduling tool is vital in making the most of their talents and time.
- 2) INVENTORY:** While employee turnover and mismanagement is costly, inventory waste is just as damaging to your bottom line: whether it's through over-ordering, improper recipe planning, or theft. Unfortunately, inventory theft costs U.S. restaurants up to \$25 billion annually, according to the National Food Service Security Council. An inventory system can help reduce waste, and increase profitability.
- 3) POS:** Many restaurants today utilize an electronic point of sale system to enter orders and handle purchases. However, your POS can also provide valuable insights into guest behavior.

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WhenToManage™

Streamline Your Operational Systems

WhentoManage.com integrates these three operational bases into one simplified, central software program. The software is Web-based, so it can be accessed from anywhere you have an Internet connection – from home or even on the go using a mobile device.

1) SCHEDULING: WhentoManage.com provides a platform for employees to communicate with you about their schedule. They can update availability, make requests for time off, view their schedules, and even swap shifts. You'll reduce time spent on scheduling and won't have to chase down employees for their information plus you'll get a big-picture overview of your staff's schedule. You can minimize labor costs, and monitor overtime, all in one place.

2) INVENTORY: Gain control of your largest expense with WhentoManage.com. You can track purchase orders, invoices, and monitor usage. Just as with scheduling, you get a real-time snapshot of your inventory system. With this data, you can better plan orders based on item quantities required for recipes on your menu. Inventory waste is reduced as your profitability increases.



3) POS: Take the guess work out of guest behavior by monitoring sales for menu item trends. This intuitive system works with your existing POS to provide custom reports and alerts delivered to your email or mobile phone.

As a restaurant owner, it's easy to get so caught up in daily operations that the "big picture" gets lost. But Restaurant Results can help you re-focus on the basic elements of a successful business, so you're ready to take full advantage of the economy's upswing that just might be coming our way in 2011!



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