



Is Your Menu Delivering Full Value to You AND Your Guests?

By **Ron Yudd**

Your menu is a display case, bill of fare, billboard, product list, advertisement... and your most valuable sales tool. Making your menu more than just a list of offerings is the key to ensuring you and your guests both receive its maximum value. Understanding what your menu is really supposed to do is critical to your success.

As part of a menu audit and review, take a new look at your menu.

1. Do your written descriptions match what gets delivered? Do the words match the final plate presentation?


2. Have you properly positioned your menu winners (those items that deliver higher profits) so it is easy for guests to select them? Have you boxed or highlighted the font on these particular items?

3. Have you created one-stop-shop opportunities by packaging or creating combinations (appetizer through dessert)? This

bundling raises the check average and guests often appreciate a meal built for them.

4. Does your menu describe other services you offer? Think about catering, gift certificates and banquet space and service.

5. Is the menu flexible enough that when a guest has a special request you can quickly accommodate them? Are items easily substituted? Can cooking methods be easily adapted to give the guest what they need or want?

First Step: Review these five points with both your front- and back-of-the-house staff. They are the people closest to your menu and closest to your guests. Get their input on these five areas and get them thinking about the menu as a tool that helps them sell the restaurant—and themselves—to your guests! 

Is it time for a menu audit?

The Perfect Leave Behind

By **Michael Attias**

You've sent out letters, made follow-up phone calls and visited face-to-face to land a new catering customer. The food was scrumptious, delivered on time and met with rave reviews. What can you do to stay top-of-mind with your new and existing catering clients?

The generic term is ad specialty. I like to call it a "Leave Behind To Stay Top Of Mind." I have some members dropping off four color magnets with every catering order. Strategically placed on the breakroom fridge allows the catering decisionmaker to never forget you while reminding their co-workers to eat lunch in your restaurant.


A couple of weeks ago, my printer delivered an order with a pad of custom printed paper in the box. Not only would this make a pleasant surprise

for your catering customers, but it will get used and seen daily.

Talk to your printer about quantity discounts and brainstorm a headline and call to action to print at the top. Include a photo of a catering action shot.


Here's an example of a headline with a call to action: "Call Bobbie G's For Your Next Hassle-Free Catering. With Prices Starting At Just \$5.95 Per Guest, You Never Pay If We're Late!"

I know one company that uses screen-printed candy jars filled with the decisionmaker's favorite sweets. Make sure to keep the jar filled at each drop-off catering.

Compared to losing a customer—or even losing out on one catered office party per year—the cost of a leave behind is insignificant. 

Put It To Work

Use these tips to have a "win-win" counseling session:

- Identify the issue that has caused the need for the discussion.
- Describe the effects of the employee's actions on the restaurant and who or what is affected.
- Ask the employee what he or she can do to solve the problem being discussed. No excuses. Request specific actions.
- Offer the employee your help with the solution.
- Describe specifically what will happen the next time the same issue occurs.
- Set a follow-up date for discussion about progress.
- Document the session and place it in the employee's file. 

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