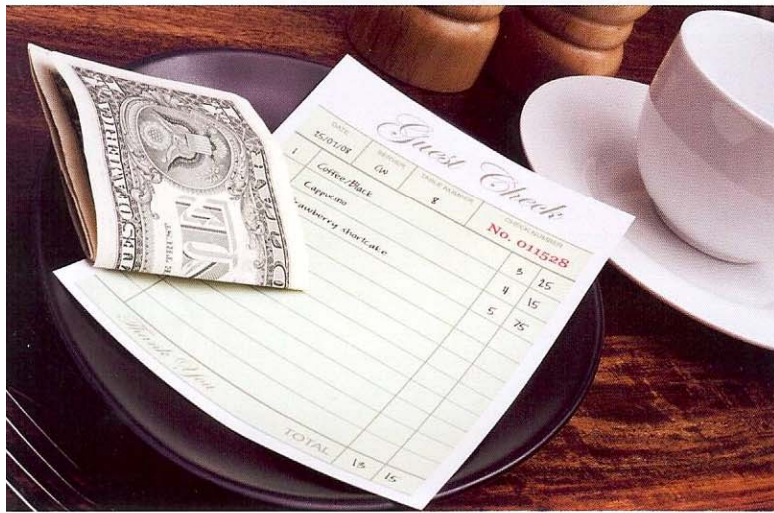


THE BIZ: OPERATIONS

Recipes for Restaurateurs™

by Linda Duke



RECIPE

Create a memorable and exquisite guest experience. By offering a unique guest experience and brand personality your restaurant will stand out from competitors and make an impression on consumers. A memorable experience generates word of mouth while increasing revenue, guest loyalty and frequency. An establishment's overall positioning, branding, mission and values must tie-in with operations to ensure quality consumer experiences. The following recipe offers a variety of solutions for developing your restaurant's unique guest experience.

INGREDIENTS

- Great ideas that tie into your company's brand and are unique to your restaurant.
- A commitment to create an experience that caters to your guests.

METHOD

1. Determine what makes your brand unique. Maybe your employees sing to customers that tip or maybe you offer awesome samples to shoppers in the local retail establishments. What makes your company stand out against all the others? Is it the people, the product or the place? How can you incorporate this into part of the experience?

Brainstorm with your employees, ask guests, friends. Make sure to record the answers. Test some of the best ideas on your guests.

2. Some different approaches:

- Personalize: Offer guests the ability to create their own experience by offering customizable options.
 - Special starters or appetizers: (bread baskets work, but that aren't very creative). Complimentary samples, an elegant amuse bouche, displays, chips or salads also help customers remember you because everyone loves something free!
 - Fun events, demonstrations, and/or fundraisers can help the community recognize your restaurant.
 - Colorful uniforms, unique tableware, bibs and napkins.
 - Menu items. Offer unique and signature menu items no other restaurant offers. Use a sizzling platter of your signature menu item, tableside or other special serving technique. Create special menu items geared towards kids conveying a great family experience that keeps them coming back.
 - Everything that touches the customer — try to create an experience for each of the five senses: taste, touch, smell, hear, see. Table displays, tableside serving techniques, fresh flowers, local art, hand lotion in restrooms, music or entertainment.
 - Offer a unique experience that makes life easier. Back pack storage area, easy access to restrooms or unique check presenters. WIFI is the latest trend for guests to surf the web.
 - Educate and involve customers about fun facts or the history of the company products, by word of mouth, from employees or even in a short newsletter to mail your guests or pass out in your restaurant.
3. Try different promotions that create traffic and drive sales for particular items or times: Kids eat free night, Two for Tuesday or Saturday balloon day.
- Get your whole staff team involved. You have to count on them to make your guest experience work. Be sure they like the ideas. If your crew is having fun, guests will too.
4. Test a few different approaches. Pick one that your guests and team seem to enjoy the most and incorporates your brand personality. ✕

➔ *Tip: Have guests fill out cards and ask what they find unique about your restaurant. Guests opinions should always be considered first.*
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