

HAVING WORDS WITH

**Linda Duke**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE,  
 DUKE MARKETING

Linda Duke doesn't work in a kitchen, but her cookbook still has grabbed the attention of the foodservice industry. That's because Duke, chief executive of Duke Marketing in San Rafael, Calif., has collected hundreds of "recipes" and case studies of local-store marketing and advertising for her guide, "Recipes for Restaurateurs: Four-Star Restaurant Marketing Cookbook." The 300-page book was chosen as one of three finalists in the food reference category for the International Association of Culinary Professionals' Annual Cookbook Awards.

Since the book's publication in August, Duke has promoted it and its complementary website, [www.marketing-cookbook.com](http://www.marketing-cookbook.com), at industry trade shows across the country. Operators who took Duke's advice to get outside their restaurants and promote their brands have praised the cookbook's practical, profitable insights.

"There has never been a resource like this marketing cookbook," said Nya Abel of 350-unit Boston Pizza International, one of the largest restaurant chains in Canada. "The easy-to-read format is genius."

Duke, who began her foodservice career more than 20 years ago with Strings Italian Cafe, insists that restaurateurs need to be a big part of their communities in both good and bad economic times to succeed.

**How did your marketing cookbook come about?**

Over the years, I'd written lots of marketing manuals, and they are a needed item for franchisees. But [the manual usually] looks like a textbook. You would see them on a bookcase collecting dust. I thought, "There's got to be a better way to put that info into a better format so operators actually use it."

In 20 years of doing local-store marketing, I've done everything from partnering with dry cleaners to working with churches. I have all these case studies. I decided on the recipe format, because operators are used to reading things that way: Here are the directions and the ingredients you need.



**FAST FACTS**

**EDUCATION:** B.A. and B.S., California State University-Stanislaus; M.B.A., Northwestern University  
**HOMETOWN:** Novato, Calif.  
**PERSONAL:** married  
**HOBBIES:** writing, golf

**What do restaurants need to know about local-store marketing?**

Forty years ago, you didn't have to do a lot of marketing in restaurants. Now with so much competition, how do you become the consumer's choice? The best way to be chosen is to be part of your community. Every person in your three-mile radius should know about your brand. Every restaurateur is looking for answers, and the answers are within your three-mile radius.

**Will the industry shift to more local-store advertising?**

I think we're already seeing it. All this sampling, driving trial, and giveaways like at Denny's and Quiznos — these are tactics I've been doing for years. Other marketing is heading there, because operators are seeing traction using cost-effective ways like social media and e-mail databases, which are alternatives to just buying media.

The biggest mistake an operator could make is to be scared from a leadership standpoint. Go introduce the brand to area schools and business people, and don't think you're going to go out of business. If your house is on the line, get out of the four walls and focus on the three-mile radius. If you're aggressive in the downturn, you'll come out ahead.

— Mark Brandau