

ATTENTION FOOD BUYERS: SAVE THIS DATE!

6TH ILLINOIS FOOD EXPO

THE Showcase of Illinois Food Products!
October 7, 2009

12:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**Renaissance Schaumburg
Convention Center - Schaumburg, IL**

Sample Food Products From Illinois Food Companies

**CALL NOW TO RECEIVE AN INVITATION TO
ATTEND AT NO COST!**

FOR MORE INFO:

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217-524-3012

E-mail: larry.aldag@illinois.gov



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Profile of AARP's 40 million members

Age

50-54	12%
55-59	17%
60-64	18%
65-69	18%
70-74	14%
75+	23%

Gender

Female	155%
Male	45%

Education

Some HS or less	9%
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HS grad	26%
Some college	32%
4 year degree	33%

Employment status

Part time	14%
Full time	31%
Retired	47%
Other	8%

Median household income (2007)

\$67,800	50-64
\$44,200	65-74
\$33,100	75+

Courtesy: AARP

Restaurant Success With A Newsletter ★

Diane Chiasson, FCSI, president of Chiasson Consultants Inc.

One of the key steps to building a solid marketing plan stretches beyond what your customers see or receive while they are inside your restaurant operation. You need to be able to reach out to your customers on the outside.

Everyone is familiar with the bills, junk mail, flyers and coupons that get stuffed into your mailbox everyday, but have you considered a newsletter? Newsletters **communicate with customers** and promote your specials. Whether they are delivered by mail or email, or available in your restaurant or local businesses, newsletters provide useful information about your establishment to customers, potential customers and staff.

Newsletters are also an excellent way to boost sales, build repeat business and increase customer loyalty. Most importantly, they are an ideal form of advertising.

Use your newsletter to build your database by having customers sign up for it either via mail or email. Give your customers an incentive to sign up for it by offering them a useful coupon when they receive their first newsletter, or by holding a monthly/quarterly drawing whereby winners are announced in the newsletter.

Use your brand colors, fonts and style in the newsletter so that when someone picks it up, they recognize your restaurant.

If you want to print and/or mail your newsletter, decide if you want to go with a single 8 1/2 - by 11-inch page, or with print on the front and back, or a two-sided 11- by 17-inch format. Also take into consideration whether or not you want your newsletter to be in color, or in black and white.

Make sure you come up with a catchy name for your newsletter that readers will be able to associate with your brand and operation.

Here are a few ideas that should get your started for your first few issues. You can also talk to your customers to find out what they would be interested in reading and learning about your restaurant.

1. Promos, coupons, general information

Your newsletter should always include information about your restaurant including your address, times of operation, dress code, reservation policy and telephone number. At the top of each newsletter, always feature any specials, events or promotions you are running that month, or highlight new menu items. You may also remind your customers how valuable they are to you by offering a special coupon. Remember, your reader will be more interested in your newsletter if there is an offer in it that will benefit him/her!

2. Get to know you

In your inaugural newsletter, you should tell your

readers something about yourself and your great team. What is the history behind your restaurant? Why did you decide to open it? Why are you so passionate about food and making your customers happy? Make sure to include a photo of yourself and your team so that customers will recognize you when they see you.

3. Special recipes and cooking tips

If your restaurant specializes in a certain type of ethnic cuisine, share some secret ingredients that you use, and simple recipes to go along. If you run a high-end restaurant, have your chef create fancy but easy recipes that customers can try out at home to dazzle their dinner guests. You can also include recipes to secret sauces or dressings, or desserts.

4. Spotlights and features on local suppliers

Tell your customers about where you source your food, especially if you buy locally. Write a spotlight on a different artisan cheese maker, bakery or local farmer, or feature some of the different wines and beers that you sell you in your restaurant. You can tie in your spotlight by running a promotion for their products in your restaurant that month.

5. Be environmentally friendly

Tell your customers about why your restaurant is so environmentally friendly, what kind of recycling program you run, which types of eco-friendly materials you use in your kitchen, and other types of things you are doing to make your restaurant as green as possible.

6. Charity work, sponsorships

If there is a particular charity you sponsor, give a brief profile about the charity and how it helps the community, and what your restaurant has done to help. If you donate your leftover food to a food bank, write about it. If you sponsor a local kids sports team, write about recent games and their successes.

7. Introduce your employees

Introduce your staff. It could be fun to feature one employee per newsletter offering short anecdotes about him/her, so that customers can get to know your staff better, and get a chance to share something personal with them. Include their picture and maybe a nickname. Good customer/staff relations also lead to better business.

8. Customer appreciation

Feature a customer of the month, what he likes about your restaurant and what he always orders when he comes in. You can also feature positive comments that you receive from your customers in this section of your newsletter.

© 2009 Chiasson Consultants Inc. All rights reserved. Diane Chiasson, FCSI, president of Chiasson Consultants Inc., has been helping foodservice, hospitality and retail operators increase sales for over 25 years. She provides innovative food and retail merchandising programs, interior design, marketing and promotional campaigns, and much more. Contact her at 416-926-1338, toll-free at 1-888-926-6655 or chiasson@chiassonconsultants.com, or visit www.chiassonconsultants.com

Importance of Leads

- Selling our industries?
- You need to have lists of new openings

- Change of hands, closings, expansions
- Check Food Industry News' Hot Leads newsletter for the latest information. -J.C.