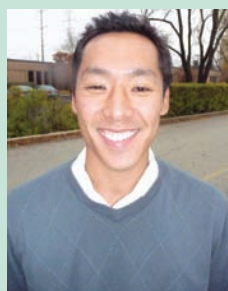


Cary Miller Presents... People Selling The Industry

This month I am proudly pictured with **David Morton**, who owns and operates the **Pompei Bakery** chain. He is also the son of steakhouse legend **Arnie Morton**. He and Chef **Michael Kornick** have opened **DMK Burger Bar** at 2954 N. Southport. It features 12+ burgers including grass-fed beef, lamb, turkey, veggie and others. This is an excellent concept and I wish he and Michael tremendous success and prosperity with it.



◀ **Oliver Yoon** is with **Boba Direct / Yofreeze**. His firm offers a full selection of ingredients to make high margin Boba Teas, fruit drinks and smoothies. These are very popular with younger and health conscious consumers. He has over 30 interesting and natural fruit concentrates and bases. The company is also a master distributor for PreGel Gelato and Yogurt Bases.

▶ **Ken Faught** is the founder of **Delta Blues BBQ**. His 11 year old company is now offering fully cooked, slow smoked pulled pork. The product comes in 5 lb pouches and may be served with or without your signature sauce. It's made locally for freshness and is a low cost food item. Just heat and serve. Try featuring this as a sandwich special, for sliders or on nachos. It is very delicious!



▶ **Odysseas Mitropoulos** is with **D.M. Emporium Imports, Inc.**, the US exclusive importers of Elike Extra Virgin Olive Oils. His company also offers Xion all natural sea salt Greek olives, herbs and oreganos. Their primary customers are food distributors, processors, retailers and commissaries across the US.



◀ Mother and Daughter team of **Rosalinda and Rosalia Barajas** operate **Samco Restaurant Equipment** in Blue Island Illinois. They have over 500 pieces of new and used equipment and small wares in stock. The firm also has several technicians on staff to do refurbishing and installations.

▶ **Susie Wagner** is with **Danish Maid Butter** company, the leading manufacturer and pioneer of those little whipped butter cups you see on finer restaurant tables everywhere. The secret is the quality. They use only grade AA butter which translates to freshness and great taste. The company also produces bulk items and holiday butter sculptures for buffets and caterers.



If you don't know how to reach any of these people, I'd be happy to put you in touch with them. Call me at 847-699-3300

Diane Chiasson Take Advantage of Takeout With 7 Easy Ideas

Today's fast-paced lifestyle has pushed the home-meal solution market into the next stratosphere. In the past decade, we have seen the emergence of a whole new line of fresh and healthy foods that are ready-to-eat in our grocery stores and even convenience stores, as well as crops of specialty food stores that serve busy people with home-made foods at a high-end prices.

Some full-service restaurants even offer takeout services through adjoining restaurants and market-style operations. The home-meal solution is no longer just a fad, but has become a way of life.

You probably already offer takeout services at your restaurant, but how can you capitalize on it to make it a whole new business altogether? Here are some ideas that can help your restaurant jump on the home-meal solution bandwagon as well. Just keep in mind that in order to engineer a successful takeout operation, the entire process needs to be made as easy as possible for your customers, from ordering and picking up, to reheating, serving and storing.

1. Proper and adequate packaging

One of the key factors of home-meal solution is the fact that it offers busy consumers little or no work after they bring home their meal. This means as few dishes as possible, and minimal clean up. The need for proper and adequate packaging for your takeout food is crucial.

Put your food in microwaveable containers that seal properly. Consider using containers that you can vacuum-seal onsite, and that will keep food hot for a longer period of time. Keep your sauces and side dishes separate. Your packaging needs to be designed to ensure that the takeout food is the same quality as what your customers would get if they dine in your restaurant.

2. Brand all your packages

Make sure that all your takeout containers are branded with your name and logo. Use your packaging to market your brand and image. You want your customers to think of you every time they open the fridge and see your branded takeout container inside.

3. Chilled, ready-to-heat items

Some of your customers might be looking to plan ahead their HMS meals. Consider offering your dishes chilled, stored in containers that can be easily reheated.

Offer "Bento-style" set lunch boxes for customers who like to bring their lunch to work. Along with your main dishes, offer

homemade soups, salads, side dishes and desserts for customers who might be looking to grab a few extras to add to their meal at home.

4. Offer multiple portion sizes

Do not limit what you offer for take-out to what you offer in your restaurant. Consider selling your meals in single servings and family-sized portions. You could also offer a snack-sized portion for customers looking for a grab-and-go snack.

5. Curbside pick-up, order online

Make life easier for your customers by setting up a separate line for your takeout operation, and separate parking spots near the front door for takeout customers only. You can also have customers order their meals online, so that it is ready to go as soon as they arrive to pick it up. If you have the space and means for it, consider setting up a curbside pick up, so customers in a hurry need not even step out of their cars.

6. Nutritional information, photos

Since the desire for more healthy food options seems to top the list of every home-meal solution survey, consider setting up a kiosk or information area detailing the nutritional data and ingredients, as well as photos of menu offerings to greet customers when they enter your restaurant. Customers will feel a lot better about what they bring home to their families for dinner if they see some fresh and healthy ingredients in their meals.

7. Pre-selected meal combinations

Help your customers decide what to take home with pre-selected meal combinations. For example, you can pre-select meal combinations that are designed specifically for certain diets including a starch-free diet, gluten-free diet or a high-fiber diet, or meals designed for vegetarians or hearty meat eaters.

You can also offer special chilled meals designed to be eaten "al fresco", or taken to the beach or a park.

During the holidays, offer complete meal sets. For example, during Thanksgiving, offer a turkey with all the trimmings, side dishes and dessert for a set price.

8. Offer home delivery

Although it sounds like a huge extra cost and hassle for home delivery, it doesn't have to be. Nowadays, you can easily subcontract delivery service for a small fee. Some delivery services even handle orders and the marketing of takeout meals from restaurants.

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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

Where I was born and where and how I have lived are unimportant. It is what I have done with where I have been that should be of interest. — Georgia O'Keeffe