OCTOBER 2020

Today's Restaurant

THE FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY AUTHORITY

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Study: Restaurant industry adding robots to offset rising labor costs

Muncie, IN – Your favorite bartender or waitress could soon be replaced by a mechanical counterpart on a future visit to the local pub or restaurant, says a new study from Ball State University.

In her study, "How to Build a Better Robot for Quick Service Restaurants," recently published in the Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research, Dina Marie Zemke, an associate professor of residential property management in the Miller College of Business, found that the overwhelming majority of respondents believe that there is no stopping the robotic transformation of the food service industry, including quick service restaurants (QSRs).

"There was a high level of resignation about the inevitability of QSRs incorporating robots during our group interviews," said Zemke, who collaborated on the study with several faculties from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. "This finding is similar to the acceptability of routine societal change. Participants felt that the incorporation of robotic technology is a question of when, rather than a question of if."

"And, imagine telling your problems to a robot instead of a human," she said. "It changes the dynamic of bartending dramatically when you add in mechanism with artificial intelligence and not common sense."

Dina Marie Zemke

Zemke points out that robotic technology designed to perform specific physical tasks has recently emerged as an option for hospitality businesses due to decreasing robotic equipment costs.

The price to purchase a hamburger cooking robot is about $60,000. However, many industrial service robots, such as robotic vacuums and robotic assembly arms, are leased. A commercial robotic vacuum will cost between $7,000 and $15,000 to purchase, but they are often leased at $4 to $6 per hour of operating time, less than the minimum wage of $7.25. The manufacturer or distributor is responsible for all maintenance on the device.

Zemke noted that the majority of robots used in the hospitality industry are technologies initially developed for other industries, such as automobile and food manufacturing, which have been modified from their original functions to perform their tasks in a hospitality setting.

Examples include the work performed by robotic vacuums, information displays, and robotic manufacturing assembly arms, which put together pizzas and cocktails.

But, the study also found that robots are still a novelty for most people.

"At this point, a lot of people have a positive impression of robotic technology that entices guests to visit the location at least once, although they were unsure whether the robotics would sufficiently overcome average food or service to entice them to return to the restaurant a second time," Zemke said. "This is consistent with past examples of restaurant concepts that provided a highly unique experience but suffered from the reputation that the guest would visit once because of the 'experience' but would not return because the

See **ROBOTS** *page 7*

Jeremiah's Italian Ice awards over 200 units throughout pandemic

Florida-based franchise continues impressive growth; enters new U.S. markets

ORLANDO, Fla., — While many franchises have halted expansion efforts during the pandemic, Jeremiah's Italian Ice has exceeded in terms of growth. The Florida-founded franchise concept, who surpassed the 100 units awarded mark earlier this year, has awarded an additional 224 units this year to 8 Area Representative partners across the country, 193 of these units awarded in the month of April alone. The new agreements will be bringing Jeremiah's Italian Ice to new markets across Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

The franchise, founded in Central Florida, has been growing astronomically since the launch of its franchise opportunity last year. With new locations recently opened in Texas and Arizona, and more to come in Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee, the franchise is well on its way to becoming a national sensation. Drawing in Area Representatives who hold experience with brands such as Tropical Smoothie, Subway, Wing Stop, Bento Asian Kitchen & Sushi, Blu Halo and Hangar 36 among others, Jeremiah's is proud to welcome these operators to help the brand go national.

"Jeremiah's is surpassing milestones quicker than almost any other emerging concept we've ever seen," stated Cameron Cummins, Co-Founder of Pivotal Growth Partners and Chief Develop–ment Officer for Jeremiah's Italian Ice. "Even more notably, all of this growth is taking place during the worst economic climate in ten years. Anyone who looks into the concept sees the huge potential within this franchise opportunity."

Each store boasts an upbeat atmosphere full of vibrant colors and offers over 40 flavors of indulgent high-quality Italian Ice, as well as creamy Soft Ice Cream. A synthesis of these two core products, the Jeremiah's Gelati is the showcase of the menu with layers of Italian Ice swirled with thick, homemade Soft Ice Cream, offering nearly limitless flavor combinations. Jeremiah's franchisees are embedded in the local community and are crucial to helping keep communities smiling through tough times.

See **JEREMIAH'S** *page 10*

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Appell Pie

Peel back the layers

Howard Appell ◆ Today's Restaurant Publisher

I'm sure all of us have seen a cross section of a rock or a soil sample, which shows layers representing time and history. Effective problem solving requires you to understand that the solution may be in the past. Knowledge of the past gives you a means to understand the way things are now and gives you the means to solve the problem now.

We built monuments to commemorate those who died at the World Trade Towers and the Pentagon in Washington DC and even in Oklahoma City. We feel as if this is the worst of times. Remember the Alamo, Pearl Harbor, The Holocaust, The Civil War, World War 1, World War 11, Korea, Viet Nam, The Crusades, Napoleon and countless other events in history, all of which must have seemed like the end of the world for those who experienced it.

> *How many times have you heard from an employee or a boss "We've been doing it this way forever"?*

To fully understand these events you must peel back the layers of time to peer into the reasons each event happened. Just like in a game of chess, each move a player makes causes the opponent to make a move in response. Over time the facts get fuzzy and history is usually written by the victorious. I remember visiting the Alamo and my first comment was, "Look at how low the walls are!" One can only assume that any fort built after the fall of the Alamo would have been built with taller walls. But why were they so low?

I remember visiting a ship built in the 1800's that was anchored in New York Harbor many years ago as a floating museum. The one thing I still remember was that the ceiling height in all the rooms was less than six foot high causing many visitors to walk hunched over. Again why would they build it so low? The answer is buried in the history of mankind. The average height of someone living in that era was well below six feet so it was fine for them.

When a problem presents itself to you whether it be in life or business like the pandemic conditions the answer is always there but you may have to do some research to uncover the solution and have a full understanding of what caused the problem in the first place. Look behind the obvious. Dig a little deeper for cause and effect.

How many times have you heard from an employee or a boss "We've been doing it this way forever"? If you feel the need to change the method, do the research and find out why it is done the current way, then make suggestions based on a fully educated position. Examine your own life and question some things you or your family members have been doing for generations. You will be amazed at some of the actions you take in your daily life that your parents did and your grandparents did too. Some of actions have their origins in the conditions set in the times of your ancestors. Peel back the layers of time to find the future.

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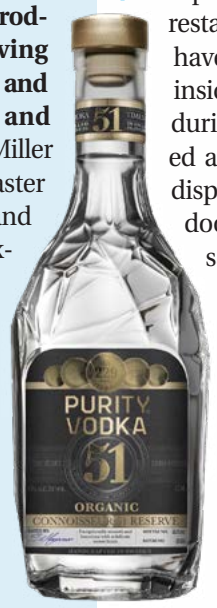
If you are hiring, Workers Opportunity Tax Credit is available to employers who hire and retain from target groups. Credits up to $9,600 per qualified new hire are available. Timely submission is critical to an electronic system that makes applying for WOTC easy to use. "The creation of our exclusive Client Portal provides you an easy way to pre-qualify and capture your tax credits. Enter a candidate into your client portal, the system does the rest. After a candidate is screened we handle all Local, State, and Federal paperwork." To learn what qualifies, go to https://GMG.me/104998 This link includes checking WOTC Tax Credits, COVID Employee Retention Tax Credit, Disaster Retention Tax Credits, Commercial Property Tax Credits. For more information, contact StarMark Business Solutions, Inc. 561.302.7619 Linda@StarMarkBiz.com

Plate Poignee announced Certified Master Chef Dale Miller, AAC, as their Brand Ambassador to represent their unique product line of COVALEY serving accessories to consumers and commercial hospitality and foodservice entities. Chef Miller is one of only 68 certified master chefs in the United States and brings with him years of extensive training and experience as a chef, restaurateur, consultant, and culinary professional. Originally crafted from a French design, the COVALEY product line offers a selection of elegant, versatile, and practical serve ware accessories that elevate the art of plating, serving, and sharing. Its unique design provides convenient and hands-free no-tip serving, allows hot plates to be carried and passed easily, and fits multiple size and shape dishware for home entertaining. "I am honored to represent this innovative culinary tool," said Chef Dale Miller. "I look forward to sharing this new product with friends and family as well as promoting its presentation and efficiency to the foodservice and hospitality industry. It's a great solution for today's environment that calls for masks and hands-free serving." For more information, visit www.covaley.com.



All around the country restaurants, cafes and sports bars are rethinking their spaces to accommodate for social distancing guidelines among other health and safety recommendations: specifically, installing or expanding their outdoor seating areas. Inside or out, customers still expect a top-of-the-line dining experience with high-quality entertainment at their favorite sports bars or restaurants. **With all-weather outdoor displays and soundbars from SunBriteTV, restaurants** can easily provide their patrons with the best outdoor viewing experience with crisp sound and clear images, even on bright, sunny days. SunBriteTV displays are designed for permanent outdoor installation so restaurant and bar managers don't have to worry about hauling a display inside or risking permanent damage during a storm. With a powder-coated aluminum exterior to protect the display from even the harshest of outdoor elements including rain, snow, salt air, humidity, insects and dust, SunBriteTV displays are designed to operate in temperatures ranging from -24°F to up to 122°F. "Customers are eager to get out of their homes and have safe dining experiences, with the features they have always enjoyed about their favorite restaurants," says Josh Litwack, Director of Commercial Sales, SunBriteTV.

Purity Distillery together with Blue Ridge Spirits and Wine Marketing, announced that they have signed a new agreement to expand their sales and marketing partnership to cover all 50 states. Purity – PurityDistillery.com - is currently distributed in CA, AZ, TX, Florida, NY, NJ, GA, TN, IL, CO, IN, AR,

See **WHAT'S GOING ON** *page 6*

Customers will remember your business if you can remember their names

John Tschohl ◆ Restauranteur and founder of BellyMelly

What's the sweetest sound that you can hear? According to recent research studying brain activation, the answer is… "Your Name". A person's name is a precious possession. Remembering a name represents a simple, but powerful customer care skill that people notice and appreciate.

Everyone loves hearing their own name! Remembering and recognizing your customers' names and using their names goes a long way to convincing them that you and your organization care. Your customers give you multiple chances every day to remember a name, recognize a face, and recall a previous transaction, all to show them that their satisfaction is your priority. It can turn a regular, repeat customer into a genuinely loyal customer who truly looks forward to their experiences with you and your company.

When you engage customers on a personal level by doing something as simple as remembering their names, you directly affect how they feel about you and your company. While remembering and using your customers' names and recognizing their faces can positively affect your personal job performance, your organization feels the impact as well. Use the resources at hand to help you learn, remember and use your customers' names:

- √ **credit and debit cards**
- √ **checks**
- √ **membership cards**
- √ **personal identification**
- √ **account histories**
- √ **contact management software**
- √ **reservations**

Be on the lookout for little ways to WOW your customer by using their name. It creates good feelings and trust and, they get the sense that you are in tune with their needs.

The perfect example of using customer names is the technology-based system at Vail Resorts. I vacation in Vail several times each year. They take extra steps to insure that each of their guests are made to feel special. I carry my season pass with me (under my ski jacket) wherever I go. When I am in the line to get on the lift, I am quickly scanned so they know that I have paid for the ticket. They are trained to immediately use my first name. "Okay John, you are good to go."

Or the use of technology at Delta Airlines. As a Diamond Member, when I call the Diamond Desk their technology has my cell phone number and they answer the phone in 30 seconds, use my name asking what they can do for me. It feels good.

Another perfect example is Wilderness Safari in Botswana. I took my wife and son to Botswana and we were amazed at our royal treatment. . Everyone from the maids to the cooks and housekeeping staff called us by name. They take very shy people and transform them into warm customer-driven employees and provide an exceptional experience.

Eliminate the negative. There are a couple of reasons why front-line people do not relate to customers in an intimate way. It's either indifference (they don't care), fear (they see customers as a necessary part of their job, but would rather get through the day with a minimum of interaction), and lack of training (most employees don't understand the importance of using customers' names).

Accentuate the positive. Utilizing customer names when interacting with them directly is an important part of making people feel like individuals. The implications are:

- ◆ People tend to like you more if you use their name during conversations. (But there is a limit; saying their name too much becomes unnatural and insincere).
- ◆ People open emails with more consistency if their name is included. (Another reason to ask for a name if you want increased conversions via email.)
- ◆ People assume you are more competent if you know their name; it's a big part of their identity, and if you recall it and use it, you are instantly viewed in a better light in their eyes.

Fact is, less than 5% of companies use their customers' name, but if you care about your customers, it's an essential part of winning them over. All customers want to be seen as individuals. They want to feel special and respected. And when they do business with you, they deserve that respect and your courtesy.

"Greeting customers by name shows how much you appreciate their business — and helps to turn them into repeat customers." *— John Tschohl*

John Tschohl *is an international service strategist and speaker. He is founder and president of the Service Quality Institute in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Described by Time and Entrepreneur magazines as a customer service guru, he has written several books on customer service including Moving Up. The Service Quality Institute (http://www.customer-service.com) has developed more than 26 customer service training programs including Remember Me, that have been distributed and presented throughout the world. John's monthly strategic newsletter is available online at no charge. He can also be reached on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.*

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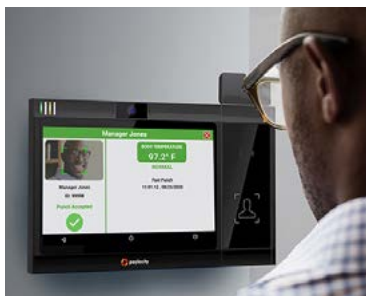
What's Going On

from page 3

and MD. "Purity is a great company and we are excited to expand our partnership together" said Carlos Carreras CEO of Blue Ridge Spirits and Wine Marketing. "The Purity brand represents high quality, natural, craft spirits and is positioned well for long term growth." "Blue Ridge has proven to be a valued, strategic partner capable of working with our customers and distributor partners to maximize growth," said Andy Kullhem, CEO of Purity Vodka Inc. "I look forward to working with the Blue Ridge family to grow the Purity brand for years to come."



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Paylocity, a leading provider of cloud-based HR and payroll software solutions, is now offering their new **next-generation touchless time clocks** as the latest addition to its modern time and attendance tools. Paylocity's time clock technology offers real-time, touch-free thermal temperature scanning to support safe and healthy workplaces. Some of the clock feature options include biometric fingerprint readers; facial recognition that works in seconds, even when employees are wearing a mask; badge readers for instant time tracking; photo capture to record and validate identity; and attestation prompts that reinforce health checks. Visit Paylocity.com for all ordering details.

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In Georgia, Little Cottage Brewery recently signed a lease for a 2,100 + sq. ft. spot. It is located at 120 Olive Street in Avondale Estates. The owners Aimee and Jon Shari have been home brewing for a long while now. They are expecting to open in Q1 – Q2 2021.

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Bahia Bowls continues national expansion with their first franchised location in Boynton Beach in June. That was followed by another franchise that opened in Philadelphia and a third in San Antonio, TX in August. "This brings our total store count to 5 open. Our development pipeline includes a few more locations, the first will probably be Naples, FL followed by Cooper City, FL. Knoxville, TN is slated for the early part of next year and we are planning locations in Bonita Springs, Fort Myers, Royal Palm Beach and Harrisburg, PA," stated Ben Casey of Bahia Bowls. Bahia Bowls Acai Café – Bahiabowls.com - was founded in 2017 to serve a rapidly expanding SW Florida market with a new, healthy dining option. The primary motivation behind the concept was to create a unique customer experience in the "fast casual" healthy dining space by providing a delicious assortment of all-natural Superfruit Bowls, Smoothies and other specialty products. Now they are going national.

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Bbot Inc, a restaurant and hospitality tech startup, announced an investment round that will allow it to scale its solutions that could dramatically streamline a venue's ordering and payment systems. The platform accomplishes this by enabling restaurant and bar patrons to order and pay directly via their smartphones. While a critical solution to address COVID restrictions, Bbot is already deployed in over 500 venues and has a proven track record in helping businesses improve efficiencies and increase revenues by up to 15%. Bbot solutions integrate directly into a venue's existing ordering and payment system and are accessed by any smartphone by entering QR or location codes situated at tables within a venue.

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With delivery and catering operations increasing industry-wide, **Vollrath expands its transport dolly offering to include new flatbed utility dollies.** American-made with impact-resistant plastic, they allow the user to easily move up to 350 pounds over any type of interior surfaces or rough exterior terrains. A recessed top surface helps secure the load and reduce shifting during transport, providing a safe and convenient solution to transport EPP carriers, delivery bags, pizza dough boxes and more. The dollies are available with pneumatic wheels or casters depending on different surfaces they will be used on. Each dolly features a storage pocket for the heavy-duty straps that are standard with each dolly. A chrome-plated handle comes standard with the pneumatic-wheeled model and is as optional with the caster-wheeled model. The handle folds down for easy storage. Visit them online at vollrathfoodservice.com.

◆◆◆◆

Refrigerated Solutions Group ("RSG"), an industry leader in refrigerated equipment and service, recently decided to continue production of the **Master-Bilt® BEM/BEL Endless Glass Door Merchandiser Series** at the RSG manufacturing facility located in New Albany, Mississippi. Due to strong customer demand for this product, with its market-leading features, ease of installation, and energy efficiency, RSG will continue production of the Endless Merchandiser Series. This will result in

See **WHAT'S GOING ON** *page 12*

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CORE welcomes Sheila Bennett as new Executive Director

Franklin, TN - Children of Restaurant Employees (CORE)©, the national non-profit organization that supports food and beverage service employees with children, is proud to appoint Sheila Bennett as executive director. With over 30 years experience in the food and beverage industry, Bennett returns to her hometown of Nashville and will lead the organization to support those in need.

Bennett comes to CORE with a wealth of knowledge and an extensive background working in non-profit capitalization and all areas of the foodservice industry. With her experience in marketing, development, and program management, Bennett is an accomplished business developer, fundraiser, and strategist with a 360° view on the industry.

"CORE is in need of an individual who will spearhead the organization to meet the growing demand for its support," said Colleen Brennan, chairman of the board of directors for CORE. "Bennett is the ideal fit for a challenge such as this."

Before joining the team at CORE, Bennett served as the vice president of business development and strategic partnerships for Fishbowl Inc.© where she led business development strategies and scored strategic alliances. Her most recent success in the non-profit sector includes the development and growth of the successful Dine Out for No Kid Hungry™. With her passion focused on the restaurant space, Bennett also managed industry relations for the National Restaurant Association© Educational Foundation as senior director.

Sheila Bennett

Bennett's vision is to engage the entire industry to support CORE and increase visibility to families who have been impacted by a health crisis, injury or natural disaster.

"During my time serving the food and beverage industry, I have met many employees and families with amazing stories of how they have faced adversity," said Bennett. "Now, I hope for CORE to be the first resource that comes to mind when employees with children are affected by a health crisis or natural disaster and are in need of support, and financial relief."

The civic-minded executive is an active member of Les Dames d'Escoffier International© – Atlanta and now the Nashville Chapter and the Women's Foodservice Forum© and remains incredibly connected to the nation's industry's movers and shakers. TR

About Children of Restaurant Employees (CORE): *CORE is a national 501(c)3 is dedicated to serving food and beverage service employees with children when either the working parent or child is navigating through a medical diagnosis, illness, injury, a death, or impacted by a natural disaster. Founded by food and beverage service industry veterans to help hospitality service employees with children bridge the financial gap when facing a health crisis or natural disaster. Since 2013, the organization has grown into a nationally recognized non-profit that has helped close to 1,100 families in 49 states. To support food and beverage employees via a donation visit COREgives.org.*

Robots *from page 1*

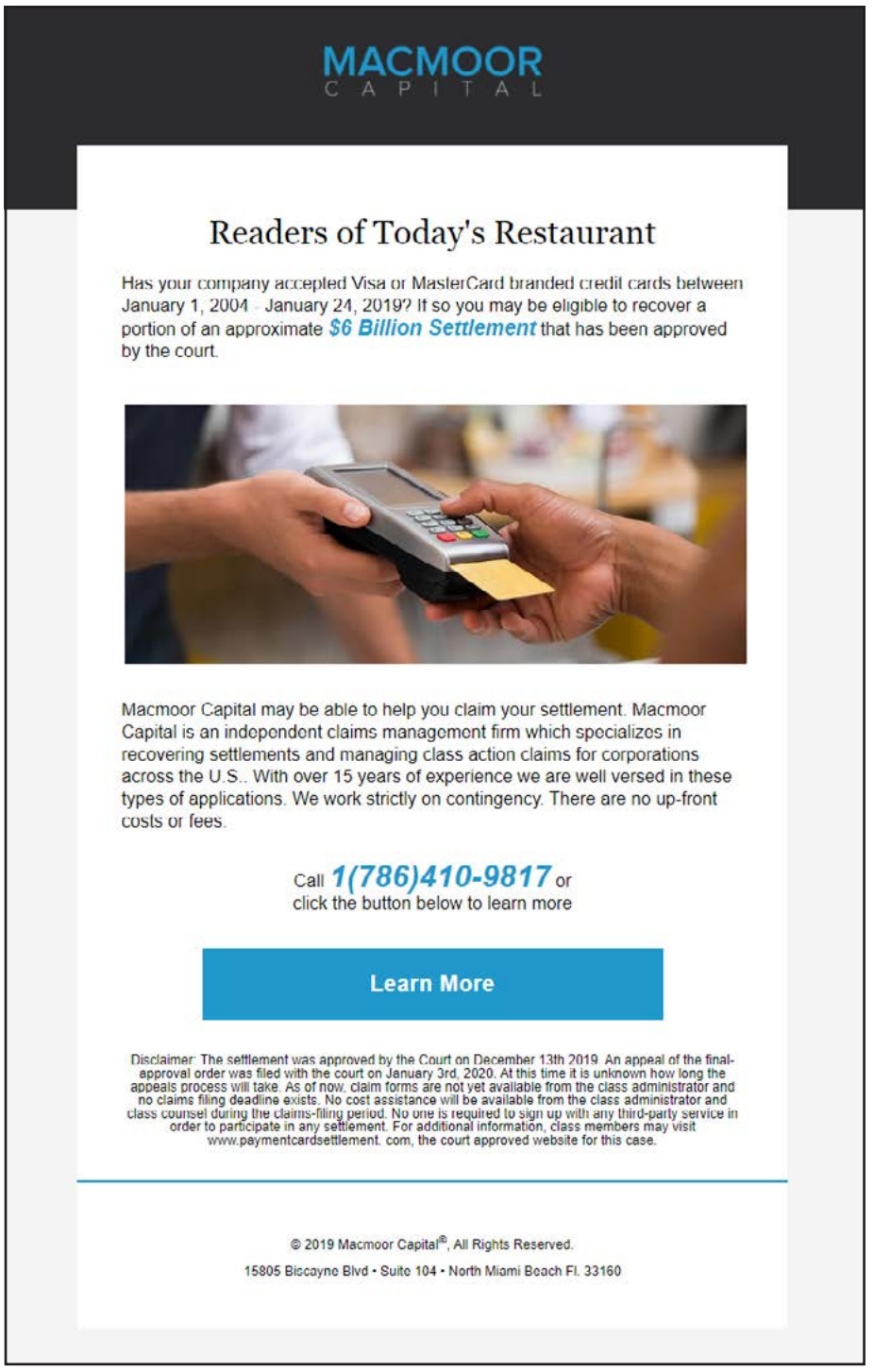
food was too expensive and/or the food quality or service provided a poor value overall."

Despite the impending changes, the study found that respondents have major concerns regarding the societal impact of robotics entering the realm of QSR operations, including the cleanliness and food safety of robot technology, and communication quality, especially voice recognition, from both native and nonnative English speakers.

In the end, Zemke believes that rising labor costs will force restaurant owners to turn to robotics.

"The genesis of this study was the 'Fight for $15' movement, which focused heavily on hourly service jobs, such as those in franchised quick service restaurants," she said. "Many restaurant operators cautiously suggested that they may explore robotics as an alternative to absorbing these increased labor costs." TR

About Ball State: *Founded in 1918 and located in Muncie, Ball State University is one of Indiana's premier universities and an economic driver for the state. Ball State's 22,500 students come from all over Indiana, the nation, and the world. The 790-acre campus is large enough to accommodate first-rate facilities and 19 NCAA Division I sports, but our welcoming and inclusive campus is small enough to ensure the friendliness, personal attention, and access that are the hallmarks of the University. Destination 2040: Our Flight Path establishes Ball State's ambitious goals for our second century. We Fly!*



#Cutoutcutlery campaign saves millions of plastics from ending up in oceans

Non-profit habits of waste solves crucial problem but not all on board

In 2019, Los Angeles-based non-profit Habits of Waste (HoW) created a solution to the plastic cutlery crisis in our country. The company's campaign #CutOutCutlery was successful in securing a default setting on both Uber Eats and Postmates apps that required customers to request cutlery as opposed to automatically receiving it. One year later, food delivery giants GrubHub and DoorDash still have not made the simple change to their default settings that would save millions of plastics from entering the environment every month.

Every year, over 40 billion pieces of single-use plastic cutlery are produced and discarded as waste. Not only is single-use plastic cutlery not recyclable, it's ending up in our oceans and killing sea life. Further, it's harming the environment by disrupting the productivity of natural systems and as these plastics break down throughout the years into micro plastics, they end up in our food and drinking water. And If these current trends of plastic waste continue, one study estimates that by 2050 the plastic waste in the ocean will outweigh the fish.

#CutOutCutlery is a win-win. Less plastic is produced, restaurants save money and consumers have a choice. Research shows that most people prefer

to eat with heavier, metal utensils compared to single-use plastic. This "new normal" would save money and protect the planet without a heavy lift.

"GrubHub and DoorDash must #CutOutCutlery and help save millions of pieces of waste from entering our already taxed environment," says Habits of Waste Founder Sheila Morovati. "With Uber Eats recently completing its billionth delivery, there's no denying the impact this campaign can have. And the time to address plastic cutlery is now – just like we did with plastic straws which the entire world responded to creating a massive ripple effect. Creating a non-negotiable plea with legislation is the goal."

Customers can help convince Grubhub and DoorDash to join the crusade by emailing them here and requesting they install an option for plastic cutlery feature on their apps to eliminate unnecessary waste. Currently, these apps automatically provide plastic cutlery for customers ordering food delivery despite user's unsuccessful attempts to opt-out.

Through the campaign and Morovati's continued efforts, The University of Southern California school system eliminated all single-use plastic items in dining halls, including cutlery, plastic bags and bottles. Habits of Waste plans to extend the sustainability crusade by bringing #CutOutCutlery to universities nationwide. Additionally, Morovati is taking the campaign to the California legislature requiring all restaurants to provide single-use cutlery only by request.

About Habits of Waste: *Habits of Waste (HoW) is a non-profit, socially conscious environmental organization committed to making simple changes that lead to profound positive impact on the environment. Founded in 2019 by Sheila Morovati, following her non-profit Crayon Collection in 2014 which spearheaded a crusade against single-use crayons at restaurants nationwide, HoW's efforts have led the company to team up with the Surfrider Foundation, which unites hundreds of organizations in a grassroots movement dedicated to saving the Earth's oceans.*

HoW has been focused on eliminating single-use plastic straws and cutlery from entering the waste stream. Morovati successfully spearheaded the ban on single-use plastic straws and cutlery in the City of Malibu, the first city to initiate such a ban and since, multiple cities and countries have followed suit thanks to the gold standard of legislation that Malibu passed and that HoW helped create. HoW identifies habitual waste throughout society and creates opportunity for change by rethinking all of societal behavior that is engrained in our daily actions. Many are no longer visible as they are so embedded in our daily routines and norms.

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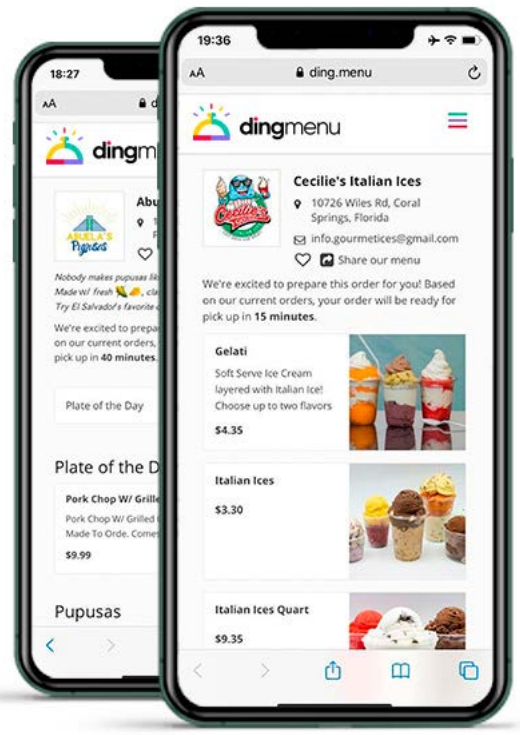

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Do these three things to strengthen your restaurant

David Scott Peters ◆ Today's Restaurant Contributor

Even though the uncertainty of the pandemic is still with us, there are still things you can do as a restaurant owner to make sure you are stronger than ever when this is all over. Restaurant operators are a resilient group, and I have a lot of hope for you and faith in your ability to get through this pandemic. These three things will help you manage increasing costs and tighter margins.

The first three things to work on right now to make sure you never go back are Restaurant 101, checklists and having a system for everything. Continue reading to learn more about how to do each of these.

Restaurant 101 is solid

Restaurant 101 is the very first thing that must happen your business. Before put together the checklists and cash controls, before you get into the myriad of systems I teach to help you get your life back and make the money you deserve. Because ultimately, if you don't do Restaurant 101 right, your restaurant sucks.

Do I have your attention? OK, let's break it down. Restaurant 101 is simply great hospitality.

- It's hot food hot.
- Cold food cold.
- A clean safe work environment for guests and employees.
- It's WOW customer service and an incredible product.

Checklists in place

To start, if you're running a great restaurant, putting out great product, and you've got great service, checklists are the key critical system you're going to put in place if you want to make money.

Why? If you can't get your managers to use a checklist on a daily basis, what makes you think they're going to take inventory Sunday, on time and accurately. If you can't get them to do the simple stuff, what makes you think it's going to change? The key to checklists is using them to create a culture where the details matter.

You need to make sure you have a checklist for opening and closing side work for every position that is so detailed that anybody could pick it up and do it. It's not just "clean the bathroom," but, "Make sure the bathroom is clean: the mirrors have no water spots, there's no standing water on the counter, wipe down the counter and throw away the paper towel, if the garbage pail is 50% filled, take it out and replace the liner." It is step-by-step instructions how you want it done, how well you want it done and by when.

Now is the time to create the checklists. Walk around your building with a yellow pad of paper, write down everything that pisses you off, grab any old checklists, grab this new checklist and put it all together. From that point forward, when you reopen, you will have checklists that set expectations.

Checklists are also essential for cash controls. Make sure every penny makes it in your bank account. Using the daily sales report from your point of sale system, track how the money came in. Then every day you put in your actual deposits, track your over/short and make sure it's within whatever you allow for servers and bartenders. Take the time to put your procedures in place for that.

A system for everything

You must have systems for everything in your restaurant. Systems are a process, a way of doing anything and everything in your business. Period. Whether it's count out a bar drawer the same way, or dollars per labor hour worked and anything and everything in between.

You need to embrace what the chains do well, which are making it through the pandemic easier than we are because they have systems, processes, ways of doing everything they do. They don't have owners in their business. They're able to cut.

What systems? There's a whole list. In fact, there's a book that I wrote, many of you should know now, called Restaurant Prosperity Formula: What Successful Restaurateurs Do. It's an easy read, available on Amazon, and will set you up with everything you need to have in place to start to create your plan for success.

You've made it this far with COVID-19 restrictions and money is starting to hit the bank. Do not blow this opportunity. Do not spend that money without having a plan.

Your plan:

- Restaurant 101
- Checklists and cash controls for everything you do
- Get your systems in place

Our industry has just gone through something it's never gone through. You have opportunity. Yes, your sales may not be as strong because we have all these people out of work and people are uncertain about how to proceed, but there will be less competition, which means it's an opportunity to be great.

__David Scott Peters__ is an author, restaurant coach and speaker who teaches restaurant operators how to use his trademark Restaurant Prosperity Formula to cut costs and increase profits. His first book, Restaurant Prosperity Formula: What Successful Restaurateurs Do, teaches the systems and traits to develop to run a profitable restaurant. Known as THE expert in the restaurant industry, he uses a no-BS style to teach and motivate restaurant owners to take control of their businesses and finally realize their full potential. Thousands of restaurants have used his formula to transform their businesses. To learn more about David Scott Peters, his formula for restaurant success, his book, or his coaching program, visit www.davidscottpeters.com.

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Jeremiah's *from page 1*

Jeremiah's wants to continue to expand its footprint so people across America can taste how amazing their treats are and to help entrepreneurs make their dreams come true.

"We have been fans of Jeremiah's in Orlando for years and have been waiting for the opportunity to be a part of an amazing brand and product," said David Hung, a member of Jeremiah's new Area Representative group in South Florida. The group is made up of Johnny Tung, Jimmy Tung, and David, who have over 20 years of industry experience at the Bento Group. "Simply put, we wanted to be part of something special. Jeremiah's values and culture are why it's leading the pack."

Throughout the Covid-19 crisis, the brand has placed an emphasis on maintaining the health and safety of its employees and customers. Jeremiah's was able to continue to spread joy in the community with their beloved frozen treats through delivery, drive thru service and curbside pickup options. Jeremiah's continues to adapt to society's new normal, pivoting its traditional franchise development efforts to instead host virtual discovery days in order to continue connecting with their pipeline of interested franchisee prospects.

"We are so happy to see our close-knit family expand and we are ready to showcase our concept to communities across the nation," said CEO and Founder, Jeremy Litwack.

Jeremiah's is poised to become a premier frozen dessert franchise of the new decade.

__About Jeremiah's Italian Ice:__ Founded in 1996 and franchising since 2019, Jeremiah's Italian Ice for its superior frozen treats and also its outstanding customer service, community involvement, and an exciting brand image that exudes the Jeremiah's motto - LIVE LIFE TO THE COOLEST®. Jeremiahsice.com.

Focused on delivering flavorful experiences to each and every guest, Jeremiah's is committed to serving its vibrant, flavorful treats up with a smile in a lively environment. With 27 locations throughout Florida, Arizona, and Texas, Jeremiah's is offering franchises nationwide. Initial expansion plans target the Southern United States, including Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Arizona and Texas.

__About Pivotal Growth Partners:__ With a combined 50+ years of experience and a network of expert financial, growth and development partners, Pivotal Growth Partners creates value and grows small, regional companies into nationally acclaimed brands. Co-founded in 2018 by longtime franchise industry professionals Bryon Stephens and Cameron Cummins, PGP helps emerging franchise brands at their pivotal growth moment through experienced leadership, access to fundamental resources and day-to-day guidance. Jeremiah's has partnered with Pivotal Growth Partners (PGP) to facilitate nationwide growth

New venue accessibility survey results indicate opportunities for change as ADA celebrates 30 years

Lexia.Solutions™ and IAVM reveal findings of joint study of accessibility in North American venues

Nashville, TN – A recent survey of how North American venue operators are currently serving customers in wheelchairs indicates opportunities for improved access, according to newly released results. The June 2020 venue accessibility survey was completed as part of a joint study on behalf of IAVM (International Association of Venue Managers) and Lexia.Solutions™, creators of UpLift, a first-of-its-kind, patent-pending device that revolutionizes live events for people who use wheelchairs. The survey results are available online at iavm.org/research.

Key findings among venue operators surveyed:

- 100 percent believe being fully accessible / ADA-compliant is important; Nearly one-third revealed their venue is not fully ADA-compliant or they are unsure of its status.
- More than 80 percent indicate that 10 percent or less of the total seats at their venues are currently accessible to guests using wheelchairs.
- More than 85 percent indicate guests using wheelchairs are limited to certain seating locations, and more than half indicate certain seating sections in their venues are not wheelchair accessible.

- More than one third of respondents whose venues include luxury suites indicate that they are not wheelchair accessible.
- Only one third indicate they have three or more companion seats per wheelchair space, the number strongly encouraged by the ADA, and 98 percent indicate they have at least one companion seat per wheelchair space.
- 76 percent have invested in structural modifications in the last five years to become or remain ADA-compliant. Nearly 20 percent have invested more than $100,000, and nearly 5 percent have invested more than $1 million.

"As the world prepares to re-open amid COVID-19, we believe that planning to ensure safe disability access now is essential to safeguard and promote the rights of one of our nation's largest minority groups," said Jeff Runnels, founder and creator of UpLift by Lexia.Solutions™. "People who use wheelchairs are often limited by entryways, seat location, visible line of sight and the number of people who can accompany them. These survey results have provided insight into the need for more seating solutions for guests with physical disabilities. Venues and facilities of all types can benefit from integrating UpLift into their reopening plans. In a post-COVID world the UpLift provides touchless access for user operation, can help grow businesses' bottom line, and can attract this largely underserved market.

"This year, as our country marks 30 years since the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), we look forward to helping further the continued progress through the introduction of UpLift and connecting with the many customers to whom it provides value - venues, schools, casinos, historically protected buildings and more – to help

See **SURVEY** *page 12*

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What's Going On

from page 6

maintaining a more focused manufacturing footprint in the New Albany facility (where earlier this year the difficult decision was made to discontinue operations completely). "The RSG leadership team has worked diligently to strengthen the overall customer experience by listening to the voice of our customers, employees, and the local community. As a result, we made the decision to continue production of the Endless Merchandiser and to keep operating a portion of the New Albany plant," stated John Ioannou, Chairman of RSG. "Our goal is to become a healthier long-term partner and I am proud of the decisions our team has made and am pleased with the outcome for all of our stakeholders," Ioannou concluded. Refrigerated Solutions Group is an industry leader with over 150 years of combined history between the Master-Bilt® and Nor-Lake® brands. Visit Master-Bilt.com for all details.

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The world's largest seafood exposition is moving to. Barcelona, Spain, starting with the 2021 edition. The 29th edition of Seafood Expo Global/ Seafood Processing Global will take place on 27-29 April 2021 at Fira Barcelona, Gran Via venue, in Barcelona. Visit seafoodexpo.com for all details.

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GoZone WiFi, a leading U.S.-based WiFi analytics and marketing SaaS company, has unveiled a new product called **Touchless Menu** to help restaurants adapt to safety and health concerns around the COVID-19 pandemic. Touchless Menu creates a contactless ordering experience during dine-in service. Guests access the restaurant's food and beverage menu by connecting to a special WiFi network, which pushes the digital menu to the guest's smartphone, tablet, laptop or other WiFi-enabled device. "Our team developed Touchless Menu after hearing from restaurant owners and operators across the country who are struggling to navigate a safe reopening," said Todd Myers, GoZone WiFi CEO. "The Touchless Menu gives restaurants an opportunity to reassure patrons that they're taking actions to reduce the spread of COVID-19." "Guests need to feel safe and comfortable in coming back to our restaurants," said Mark Ferguson, who is using Touchless Menu at his restaurant, Ferg's Sports Bar in St. Petersburg, Florida. "Many of my guests feel more comfortable using their personal devices rather than touching a physical menu. Touchless Menu encourages a comfortable experience." Learn more on their website at GoZoneWiFi.com/Touchless-Menu.

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Society 8 Hospitality Group has announced the opening of its newest concept, Sistrunk Marketplace & Brewery, a 24,000 square foot food hall, mixed-use event space and retail concept. The first of its kind in Ft Lauderdale, Sistrunk Marketplace & Brewery is located at 115 Northwest 6th Street (Sistrunk Blvd). The newly opened property features a myriad of food vendors including: Bronte Café, The Chop Shoppe, Hot Lime Craft Tacos and Ceviche, The Empanada Bodega, Fuoco Roman Pizza, Heavenly Raw, Kasai + Koori Asian Deserts, Needa' Pita, Nellie's Country Kitchen, OSOM Crepes, Poke OG, and Senbazuru Ramen. In addition, there are several private and shared event spaces; a DJ and production music academy – Wired Sound Academy, and a co-op style retail boutique – SistrunKollective. SistrunkMarketplace.com.

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Survey

from page 11

incorporate UpLift into 2021 budgets and planning."

Runnels, who invented UpLift in 2016 before founding Lexia. Solutions™ in 2017, was inspired to create the product after realizing he didn't know anyone who used a wheelchair and began to imagine how difficult everyday activities might be for those who do. Two products, UpLift Seating and UpLift Entryway, provide smart economical and highly desirable options for both businesses and families by enhancing experiences and improving access for wheelchair users. The UpLift products help overcome existing ADA compliance barriers and improve accessibility without enduring costly and lengthy construction projects. Reservations are available now, and online sales will begin in the latter part of 2020. Eligible businesses get ADA tax and LEED credits each year. For more information and to view demo videos of both devices, visit www.lexiasolutions.com.

About UpLift by Lexia.Solutions™: *UpLift by Lexia.Solutions™ is a first-of-its-kind, patent-pending device that revolutionizes live events for people who use wheelchairs. With UpLift, venue and public space managers can attract an underserved market and grow their bottom line. The Lexia.Solutions™ mission is to lift lives by creating more opportunities for people in wheelchairs to access incredible experiences independently, safely, and comfortably. Proud members of IAVM (International Association of Venue Managers), Lexia.Solutions™ created UpLift to help make buildings, homes and experiences fully accessible to people of all abilities, with a team that truly understands wheelchair accessibility. For more information visit www.lexiasolutions.com.*

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Planterra Foods launches innovative plant-based offerings for foodservice

Lafayette, CO – At a time when foodservice operators are pivoting to counteract the world's health pandemic, menu innovation and addressing consumer's evolving demands are more vital than ever. Innovative Colorado-based start-up Planterra Foods is answering the call and launching a line of OZO™ plant-based protein products with exceptional ingredients and nutritional advantage. The OZO foodservice line is now available in four plant-based offerings: burgers, ground, nuggets and breakfast sausage patties, catering to all dayparts.

The debut of OZO will elevate the protein possibilities that foodservice operators can feature on their menu to attract new customers and increase check averages. To support its partners during this recovery period and offset food costs, Planterra Foods will be providing foodservice operators specials through years' end. Foodservice partners will also have access to an OZO toolkit to help navigate the unprecedented landscape brought on by COVID-19, with convenient to-go solutions like branded burger wraps, seamless recipe inspiration, signage to highlight their new plant-based offerings and premium sanitation essentials – such as branded face masks – for staff and patrons.

As a part of the company's commitment to the foodservice industry and its mission of fostering the future generation of food creators, Planterra Foods will implement a variety of initiatives in collaboration with strategic partners to help combat the challenges the industry is facing during this difficult time.

"When we introduced OZO to consumers through retail outlets in June, we knew we had to set ourselves apart not only with the exceptional taste and clean protein label, but also with how we innovate to deliver the new plant-based offerings through outlets including e-commerce and foodservice," said Darcey Macken, Planterra Foods CEO. "We also have specially-designed OZO vans venturing cross-country giving away a million free burgers for consumers to try via safe social distancing. We recognize that foodservice operators are faced with challenging times right now, and we want to provide an outstanding, versatile and simple menu solution brimming with benefits to drive customer satisfaction and attract new patrons."

With the addition of plant-based menu items growing more than 300 percent in the last year it's clear that guests are interested in flexible protein options. In fact, 59 percent of Americans eat meatless at least one day a week, according to the National Restaurant Association (12/19/19).

"At Planterra Foods, we're striving to broaden choices and bring new protein possibilities to today's menu for both foodservice operators and customers alike seeking a better-for-you option with clean ingredients where taste is paramount," said Macken. "Our introductory line of plant-based protein products, OZO, not only helps you eat well, but also feel well – and feel good about the foods you're serving."

The Planterra team is also passionate about making a positive impact on the planet and environment and the OZO product line uses sustainable packaging to store products and plant-based ink on all of its packaging.

You can find additional information online at PlanterraFoods.com and OZOFoods.com, and join the conversation on Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter and LinkedIn.

About OZO: *OZO™ is the first brand brought to market by Planterra Foods, an innovative plant-based protein start-up from Colorado. Dedicated to delivering foods that are abundantly flavorful, and positively delicious, OZO™ has the backing of one of the world's leading food companies. OZO™ dishes up foods that broaden choices and bring new possibilities to the table. Brimming with benefits for you and the planet, their foods help you eat well, feel better and live your best. For additional information, visit OZOFoods.com.*

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I started offering delivery due to COVID-19 now what?

Elizabeth Kelly ◆ Today's Restaurant Contributor

As restaurants begin to reopen around the world, many are making the tough decision of whether or not they should continue to offer delivery to their customers. If you're in that position as a restaurant owner, here are a few questions to ask yourself:

1. Does my food travel well?

What kind of food does your restaurant serve, and how well does it travel? If you serve food items like steak or poutine that need to be eaten immediately after they're served to be at their best, delivery as a long term strategy may not be for you.

To determine how well your food travels, have each dish you plan to offer for delivery actually delivered to you at your home. Use this delivery audit to evaluate your food and the delivery experience.

If some dishes travel better than others, take the ones that don't last off your delivery menu. This will reduce customer complaints and protect your restaurant's reputation for amazing food.

2. Is delivery profitable?

So delivery got you through the few months your restaurant couldn't serve dine-in guests. But long term, does it make financial sense to continue?

There are a few different ways to offer delivery to your customers, the most popular of which are in-house deliveries (where you or your staff deliver the food) and third-party deliveries (where you list your restaurant with a third-party aggregator and they take orders and do the deliveries for you). Each has its own associated costs.

> *Consumers' desires have shifted away dine-in, and they are now more interested in take-out and delivery options.*

Third-Party Delivery

Third-party delivery providers like UberEats and Postmates charge a percentage of the order, and the percentage they charge can make a big impact on your profitability. There are also other costs involved, like to-go packaging, extra labor, and any related technology integration costs.

Go through your own costs, and determine how much each order costs you and what your margin is on delivery orders. How many orders do you need in a night, week, or month for third-party delivery to be profitable? Do those numbers make logistical sense? Is it realistic?

There are ways to reduce your costs, like negotiating with third-party providers and adjusting your operations to be more efficient. You can also re-evaluate your pricing. But step one is knowing your current costs and margins.

In-House Delivery

If you've been sending out your servers to do deliveries during the pandemic, you've been doing in-house delivery. In-house delivery is favored by many restaurants because it gives you more control over the customer experience. It is a bit more complex and cost-intensive to set up and maintain though. For a detailed overview of the costs associated with in-house delivery, read this article.

Are customers demanding delivery?

If you already have delivery set up, removing it as an option before your customer base is ready to return to dining-in at your restaurant is obviously a bad idea, but should you keep it in the long term? According to various studies, delivery is here to stay. More and more consumers are ordering delivery, and that's a trend that started long before the pandemic.

Back in 2019, Restaurant Dive was predicting that by 2021, 50 million consumers in the U.S. would be ordering from third-party delivery apps, and Forbes was predicting it to be a $200 billion global industry. Neither could have predicted that a global pandemic would drive restaurants and consumers to food delivery much faster.

Consumers' desires have shifted away dine-in, and they are now more interested in take-out and delivery options. To get a better idea of what your restaurant's customers want, ask them! You can ask them directly, or use a survey. Either way, spend time learning what your customers expect.

Delivery as a long term strategy is something that takes time and dedication for success. Look at businesses that offered delivery pre-COVID-19 to understand what they do well. Learn from them, and you'll be increasing sales with delivery in no time!

***Elizabeth Kelly** is the Marketing Specialist with SpeedLine Solutions Inc., a leading pizza and delivery point of sale developer. SpeedLine delivery POS is built to streamline delivery management in restaurants. Founded in 1990, SpeedLine has a long, successful track record in pizza and delivery point of sale. Today, we serve restaurant companies all over the USA, Canada, Mexico, and select franchises abroad.*

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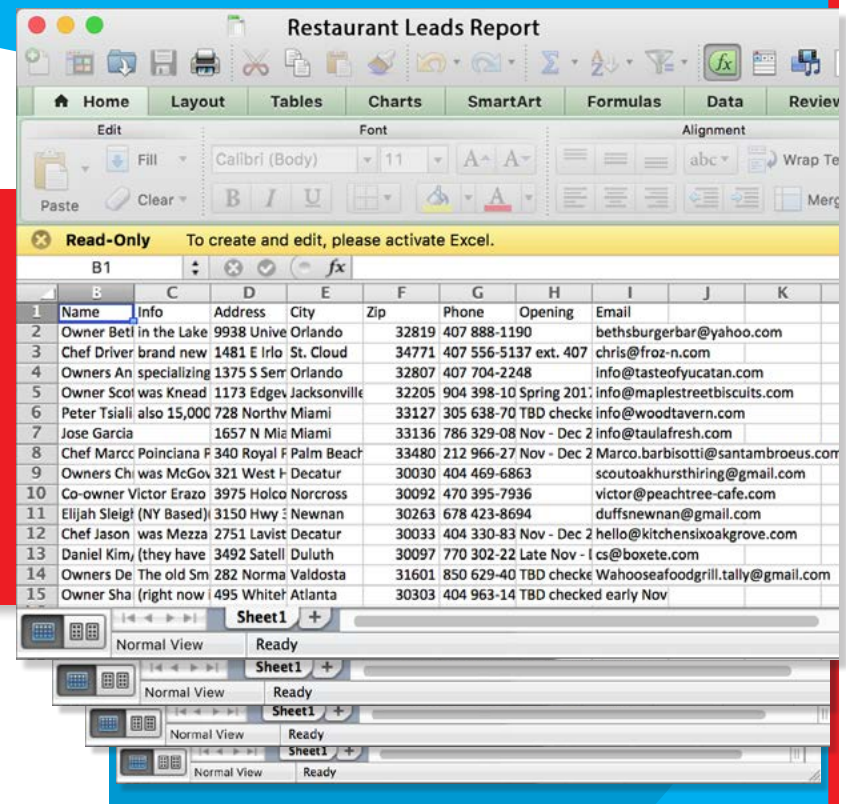

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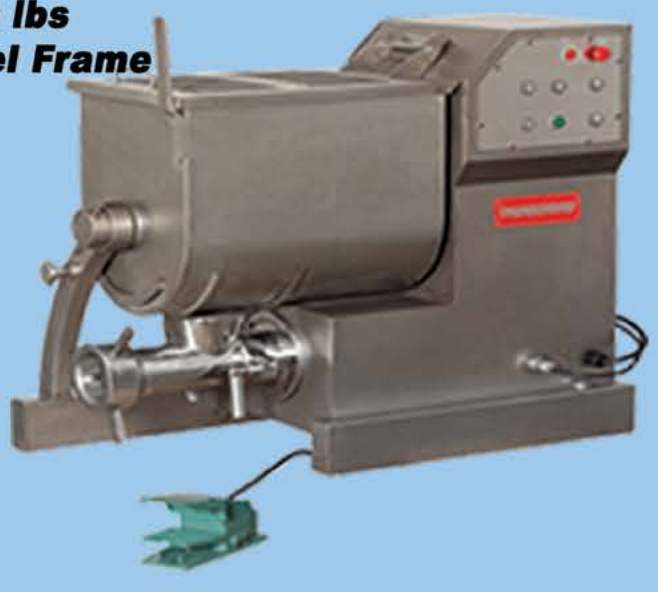

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