

# Today's Restaurant

THE FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY AUTHORITY

VOLUME 27

## Appetizers

When customers behave badly  5

NASDA elevates food and beverage businesses  6

Dessert Holdings acquires Steven Charles  8

Protect your sensitive data by recycling  12

## Entrées

- Advertisers Directory.....4
- Appell Pie .....4
- What's Going On .....3
- TRN Network Group.....14 & 15

# FTC poised to begin fake review crackdown

By Greg Sterling

VP of Market Insights for Uberall

### The Federal Trade Commission has review fraud in its sights

In October, the agency notified more than 700 national advertisers that "misleading use of endorsements could lead to major financial penalties." The FTC considers online reviews to be a subspecies of endorsements and fake reviews to be a form of "consumer deception," which falls within its enforcement purview.

Review fraud is rampant online in both product and service categories. Its frequency and scope vary by industry and by consumer site. The most comprehensive study done to date, published earlier this year by my company, Uberall, and The Transparency Company, analyzed four million reviews on Google, Facebook, Yelp and Tripadvisor in 19 business categories. Restaurants was one of those.

The analysis used a variety of techniques to spot fake reviews, including machine learning, natural language processing, user and IP location, review profile analysis and a number of others. Of the four sites, Google had the most fake reviews overall (10.7%), followed by



Greg Sterling

Yelp (7.1%), Tripadvisor (5.2%) and Facebook (4.9%). However, there were business categories that had higher percentages of review fraud. On Google, for example, moving companies, plumbers and locksmiths all featured more than 20% fake reviews.

*Our report estimated that well over 100 million reviews on Google were questionable or potentially fake.*

Restaurants had one of the lower incidences of review fraud in the study. It was 15th out of the 19 categories in descending order. Overall, only 4.3% of restaurant reviews across all four sites were inauthentic or fake. Google had the highest percentage of fake restaurant reviews at 5.1%, while Yelp had the lowest at 3.4%.

While these restaurant percentages may seem relatively low, compared to 20% for example, they still represent millions of online reviews. Our report estimated that well over 100 million reviews (across categories) on Google were questionable or potentially fake. Google itself acknowledged that in 2020

See **FTC** page 12

# A complete tech stack: BOH predictions for 2022

By Greg Staley

The last 18 months have transformed the restaurant industry. Thousands of operators had to close their doors, others are still just squeaking by, and even more scrambled to put technology in place to keep the lights on through the disruptions that COVID-19 has created. The operators who have best weathered the challenges of the pandemic are those who already were set up for off-premise dining and were early tech adopters.

The same thing that drove success for those operators is also driving the trends we see being big in back of house for 2022. Forward-thinking brands will be looking to ensure their technology is effective, well integrated, easily accessible and meeting the demands of current industry challenges.

So, what do I anticipate we will see in the coming year?

**1. Increased emphasis on labor controls**



Greg Staley

While food and labor have always been the big two, anything that helps manage labor costs is rising to the top right now. Labor shortages that will likely last well into 2022 have operators looking for scheduling and labor tools to help out.

Clocking enforcement is an easy win that many operators can turn to.

By shaving 15 or 20 minutes off an early clock in, operators will gain small improvements without changing anything else. Additionally, more efficient use of labor through predictive scheduling can help operators do more with the employees they have, ensuring you have coverage at peak times.

This is a relatively simple lift for operators looking for help in a labor crunch, who know any tools that improve labor now will still be helpful and effective as labor levels normalize.

**2. Better data visibility with better integrations**

Data is king, but too many operators are working with disconnected platforms. Information without integration is just noise. As brands look for ways to better understand their businesses, building a tech stack that integrates well will be at the top of the list.

Real reporting isn't possible without data you can see and trust.

See **BOH** page 14

Click me to find out what's new in 2022!




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# What's Going On

## Important new products, corporate news and industry events

### Happy New Year!

Next Level Brand recently announced that they are opening Boulon Brasserie this summer in Tampa. Located at the massive Water Street Development, this brings their portfolio to three concepts. The vision for Next Level Brands Holdings LLC is to elevate the culinary landscape of Tampa Bay by creating a collection of highly lauded dining experiences. Located at 1001 Water St., Boulon Brasserie will be an upscale dining experience.



As the restaurant industry starts to reset and focus on the future, trends old and new will take the spotlight on menus and in off-premises transactions. For the What's Hot 2022 Culinary Forecast, the National Restaurant Association partnered with the professional chefs of the American Culinary Federation, whose members were invited to review and rank various food items and culinary concepts. Using their expertise, chefs forecast what they think will reign on menus in the year



The Blue Dog Cookhouse and Bar is coming to Boca. It is a casual restaurant serving New American fare with New York City roots. This will be their 1st in Florida. It will be located in Town Center. "Our chefs make use of top quality ingredients to give both classic and innovative dishes their best life." Visit them in 2022.

ahead in 12 categories of trends, including daypart occasions, menu categories, beverages, flavors, global inspirations, packaging/off-premises trends and industry macro-trends. Visit restaurant.org for all details.



Dennis' Horseradish, the premium, small-batch horseradish brand, announced it has received its Safe Quality Food (SQF) Program certification, a trusted and rigorous food safety and quality control program recognized by retailers, manufacturers and food industry experts internationally. "When you're up

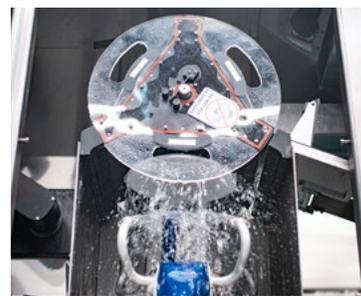


to something good, you welcome the scrutiny, it pushes you to be better," says Mark Whitmore, COO and co-owner of Dennis' Horseradish. Now a SQF-Certified site, Dennis' Horseradish is planning further expansion. "We are focused on servicing all industry segments, from bulk orders with food manufacturers, foodservice providers and hospitality players to private label opportunities, retail and other commercial buyers, nationally and internationally," says Mark Healy, CEO of Dennis' Horseradish. "This certification is another important milestone in the life of Dennis' and one we've worked hard to

reach. And it has already enabled us to fulfil two large food manufacturing orders, one in Canada and another in Asia." dennishorseradish.com.



Dishcraft, a robotics company focused on solving labor and sustainability challenges facing foodservice operators, has released data on the company's sustainability efforts. Based on data collected on three separate customers using Dishcraft's reusable container service, the company has the results on reduction of waste and emissions. "The numbers prove what we've known all along--that Dishcraft is a valuable service to any corporate, hotel and hospital cafeteria, as well as restaurants



looking to reduce disposable foodware and water waste," said Linda Pouliot, CEO and co-founder of Dishcraft. "As we expand our offerings beyond the Bay Area, we're confident that we can continue to

positively impact this industry and make a bigger impact on waste and emissions reductions." Sustainability is

See WHAT'S GOING ON page 10

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## Appell Pie

### Pandemic re-do

Howard Appell ♦ Today's Restaurant Publisher

As I sit down to write this column we are all in the midst of the generational event that will change us forever. Who would have thought that the strongest country in the world would be brought to its knees by an unseen enemy that sent fear and worry through the land.

Humanity as we know it or thought we knew it has been faced with plagues and catastrophes from the beginning of recorded time and even before. Civilizations we don't know anything about lie beneath the oceans or the sands of time in Death Valley and deserts around the globe. The dinosaurs were wiped out by a meteor hitting the earth. We all heard about these events but thought nothing of it, it was ancient history. We are living in our grand and great grand-children's history and what happens now will forever be taught in schools around the globe.

This event started for me on March 9, 2020 in Port St. Lucie at a Mets Spring Training game. The word pandemic was just being used by the mainstream media and awareness was just peaking. A woman sitting next to me was coughing for most of the first three innings and finally we decided to leave our seats and go to the outfield area with fewer people. The next day we went into lock down.

Dr. Fauci and others are now saying the variant Omicron will start to dissipate by the end of January but the damage has already been done to businesses and in some cases in tragic loss of life. Business and life will come back to "normal".

Business will re-open and restaurants and bars will again start to serve but which ones will survive? Which companies will survive the month or five week layoff? The ones that are well known! How many My Pillows can I buy in five weeks? How many doses of Otezla can I take? How many cars can I buy? My point is simple, advertising in

the worst of times will pay off in the best of times. I remember a story about Pepsi Cola back in the early 1900's when sugar was not readily available and Pepsi could not produce their new cola drink. Their ownership decided to advertise heavily even though they knew they couldn't fill the orders but they were creating a brand. Once the rationing was over they were a well-known and desired brand. Here is a link to the history of Pepsi Cola. <https://secure.footprint.net/cupages/pepsi/ThePepsiStory.pdf>

*I have been preaching this theory for twenty five years and it's now more important than ever.*

When the restaurants are finally allowed to open the public will be "hungry" for dining experiences and restaurants will be looking to purchase equipment or furniture, certainly food and beverages once again. Who will get the business? The restaurants and suppliers who recognized the "Pepsi" theory of overcoming the adversity with a view of the future. I have been preaching this theory for twenty five years and it's now more important than ever.

We need to get back to normal as quickly as possible without endangering the public. Scientist will come up with tests to see who has the virus, who has had the virus and new treatments and vaccines for all but it is up to each of us in the business world to fuel the engine of the economy with high test fuel. The My Pillow guy understands it, I bought one. 

### Index of Advertisers

Broward Nelson.....	3	ITD Safety.....	2
CPS-Cocard.....	5	Oil Chef.....	16
The D in Delicious / World of Fudge.....	7	Prakas & Company.....	6
Enviromatic.....	3	Rogue Financial Group.....	4
Fisher Auction Company.....	8	Toby Neverett Auctions.....	4
Florida Restaurant Association.....	5	TRN Network Group.....	14 & 15
Hudson Robinson.....	10		



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# When customers behave badly: Ways to respond



Mihir Korke ♦ Head of Acquisition at Clover Network

Customer disagreements can sometimes be unavoidable when running a small business. This is true across every vertical – but conflict is especially prevalent within the dining industry.

This article explores why customers behave badly. It also explains how best to deal with difficult situations as quickly as possible so that you can continue devoting your time and energy to those customers who add value to your business.

Customers increasingly expect more from the businesses they support, with next-day delivery, on-demand access, and free upgrades becoming standard across many industries. Staying current with these changing expectations can be difficult for any business. This is particularly true for the restaurant industry, with its thin margins and high competition. Against this backdrop, how do you respond to customer conflict?

## The right way to handle unruly customers

Use the strategies below to help de-escalate situations before they get out of hand.

### 1. Stay calm

It's hard to stay calm when an angry customer is yelling at you. But, yelling back will only make the situation worse. If remaining calm in the face of adversity is difficult, just know that it's nothing personal. People get upset for any number of reasons. If you weren't there, that customer would be yelling at someone else instead.

### 2. Listen carefully

When dealing with an upset customer, give him or her your undivided attention as you carefully listen to everything he or she has to say. You'd be surprised how often active listening can help defuse tense situations.

### 3. Repeat the problem

The next step involves repeating the customer's complaint in your words. This helps to build empathy, understanding, and rapport – all of which are crucial for ultimately resolving the underlying issue.

### 4. Solve the problem (if possible)

If the issue is easily solvable, then solve it right then and there. An unusually long wait time for a table, for example, might result in drinks or dessert on the house. The same goes for mixed up orders, a fly in the soup, or anything else that calls for a simple fix.

Unfortunately, not all conflicts can be solved so easily.

When there's a disagreement over company policy, for example, you might

not have as much wiggle room to bend the rules. In these instances, the best approach is to explain why the policy exists, communicate that your hands are tied, and invite that customer to comply with the rules. Hopefully, the customer will understand. If not, it's time to move on to the fifth and final de-escalation step.

### 5. Bring in the managers

Waitstaff and busboys work on the front lines of hospitality, but they're not always the best people to handle truly difficult situations. Sometimes, managers are better equipped since they:

See **BEHAVING BADLY** page 9

*It's hard to stay calm when an angry customer is yelling at you.*

## Why customers behave badly

Although every instance of conflict is unique, most customer complaints fall into one of the following categories:

- ♦ **Poor quality service:** It's important to maintain certain standards to help ensure customers have a positive experience when dining at your restaurant.
- ♦ **Not being heard:** It's important to train your team to always listen and carefully understand each customer's concerns.
- ♦ **Disagreements over policies:** From seating requirements to mask mandates to dress codes, there are all kinds of company policies that might not sit well with your customers.

In addition, there are many reasons that are outside of your control – such as frustration over personal circumstances or general dissatisfaction with societal issues. As the world continues to emerge from the pandemic, you can expect to see complaints stemming from these types of issues.

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# NASDA elevates small food and beverage businesses in the international marketplace

Through a cooperative agreement with USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture offers unparalleled resources for growing small to medium sized food and beverage companies.

Getting product on shelves across the world can be an intimidating task for small to medium sized food and beverage companies, but NASDA has proven it doesn't have to be. Each year, the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) partners with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service (USDA FAS) to empower small business owners with

the tools and relationships needed to export their U.S. grown and made products around the world.

Since 1982, the NASDA and USDA FAS cooperative agreement has played an integral role in furthering the success of U.S. businesses in the international marketplace. Through the USDA FAS Market Access Program, NASDA hosts annual domestic trade shows with a large international

audience—the American Food Fair and the USA Pavilion at the Americas Food & Beverage Show—which provide budding food and beverage businesses with unparalleled access to international buyers.

Just in the last three years, NASDA's trade promotion activities have led to over \$65 million in projected export sales, 125 companies acquiring new export markets for their business, and nearly 150 export coaching sessions for exhibitors looking to maximize their international business growth.

However, not everyone knows about these resources. We're asking for your help to spread the word with local farmers, food manufacturers and beverage makers about the opportunity to exhibit with NASDA through your state department of agriculture. An easy way to start is by sharing this blog post via social media and internal channels, letting them know that support is available to expand export.

and beverage exporters an excellent opportunity to join the 2,100 exhibiting companies and 62,550 registrants of the event.

## The USA Pavilion at the Americas Food & Beverage Show

What better place to market products to Latin America and the Caribbean than Miami? NASDA has been organizing the USA Pavilion at the Americas Food & Beverage Show for 16 years in partnership with the Miami World Trade Center. This event brings buyers, suppliers and industry experts together in one high-energy environment. The less inhibiting regulations of Caribbean and Latin American markets make it the perfect opportunity for small and medium companies to break into the international marketplace.

"To ensure our exhibitors' investment of time leads to sales at the show, NASDA arranges private meetings with high-quality international buyers on their behalf. The 2019 show encompassed over 660 pre-scheduled appointments, resulting in participating exhibitors projecting an additional \$16 million in future export sales within 12 months."

The next American Food Fair at the National Restaurant Association Show will take place May 21- 24 2022, at McCormick Place in Chicago, Illinois, and the next USA Pavilion at the Americas Food & Beverage Show will take place Sept 12-13, 2022 at the Miami Beach Convention Center.

"Combining NASDA members' duty to promote products grown, harvested and processed in the U.S. and USDA's responsibility to develop new foreign export markets, we are supporting new exporters in growing their businesses year after year. Share our story to help make a difference for more beginning food entrepreneurs, stated the company."

*About NASDA: NASDA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit association which represents the elected and appointed commissioners, secretaries and directors of the departments of agriculture in all fifty states and four U.S. territories. NASDA grows and enhances American agriculture through policy, partnerships and public engagement. Online at nasda.org.*

*The most successful restaurant owners I've ever worked with follow the restaurant prosperity formula.*

Further, NASDA helps exhibitors feel supported before, during and after trade shows by providing additional resources such as educational opportunities and partial reimbursement for exhibition costs.

## The American Food Fair

The American Food Fair has been around over 20 years and takes place at the largest foodservice and hospitality marketplace in the Western Hemisphere—the National Restaurant Association Show. NASDA launched the American Food Fair in conjunction with the show to give U.S. food

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# Why restaurant owners should care about company culture



David Scott Peters ♦ Today's Restaurant Contributor

The major transformation restaurant owners have in working with me is the shift in their company culture. Have you heard people talk about company culture and how important it is? As a systems guy who helps restaurant owners have a life and make money, I can tell you the systems are the easy part. The part where restaurant owners have to change their company culture is the hard part of the journey, but a necessary one for success.

Implementing systems is just a giant group of tasks. While some of these tasks may be more time consuming than others, the truth is they're just a list of projects that need to be completed. Many of these systems, or tasks, seem stupid easy. For example, let me talk about three of them.

♦ **Checklists:** These are the opening and closing side work checklists. Checklists as a whole are a clipboard system.

♦ **Key item tracker:** you track five to 15 items every shift to make sure they're not stolen. It's a clipboard system in that it's a simple form you print off and put on a clipboard in the kitchen

♦ **Waste tracker:** This clipboard system tracks food that is thrown away because of mistakes, such as incorrect preparation, incorrect orders by the

*The most successful restaurant owners I've ever worked with follow the restaurant prosperity formula.*

front of the house, and food that spoils. It's a proactive tool to track dumb ass mistakes so everyone can avoid making them the next day.

These three systems can technically be implemented in a day. If you do checklists to the detail I teach, that process will take weeks to months, but for the purposes of this example, you can get your first version of a checklist out and in use in just the day if you had to.

Here's the point. The challenge isn't getting them in place, it's getting them used daily. That requires restaurant owners to put serious effort behind changing their company culture.

To get these things in place, to make sure they're used daily, you must do these five things:

1. Have a manager on every shift, or some sort of supervisor. They can be an hourly supervisor, a salaried manager, or somewhere in between. Somebody must be in charge of ensuring each of these systems is being used every day. If not, the moment you stop followed up, they're not used anymore.

2. View accountability as an opportunity to coach. Train people what their job is, how to do it, how well it should be done, and more importantly, by when. Make them demonstrate back to you that they can do it on their own without your help so they can no longer use as their excuse that they didn't know. Then they know what their job is, the obligations to do their job, and they make a decision to do their job or not. This makes them accountable to their work. It makes them answerable for doing it or not. So we take accountability and it change it to answerability, which is a positive because you change them, changing your company culture.

3. Do not let one employee hold your company back. No longer can you let that long term employee, family member – especially family members – stop you dead in your tracks. You'll know who that person is because when you introduce the changes you want to make, they'll be the ones saying things

like, "Oh, no, our restaurant is different," or "That's too hard. We tried that and it didn't work." It stops you dead in your tracks. But as the leader of your business, you get to lead it forward, regardless of the naysayers.

4. Invest in education. If restaurant owners want to change their company culture, they must be willing to invest the time it takes and the money for necessary education. The most successful restaurant owners I've ever worked with follow the restaurant prosperity formula. They understand they don't know what they don't know. They are looking for ways to learn all the time. They go to trade shows, workshops, seminars, webinars, and they read trade publications. They invest in things such as coaching and courses. They go to YouTube and consume information all the time. They're always learning because they don't know what they don't know. And some of those things, like coaching or workshops and seminars, require time and money to learn. But by learning, they understand. But it doesn't matter what they know if their managers don't also know it. Reinvest time and money to educate your managers. When your managers know they

See **CULTURE** page 14

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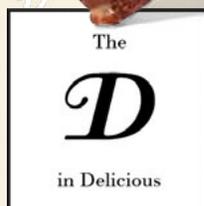
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# Dessert Holdings acquires premium dessert maker Steven Charles

Highly Complementary Acquisition Positions Steven Charles for Continued Growth

St. Paul, MN and Aurora, CO - Dessert Holdings®, a North American leading premium dessert company, announced that it has acquired Steven Charles — A Dessert Company (“Steven Robert Original Desserts,” DBA “Steven Charles”), a maker of gourmet desserts supplying foodservice and retail customers across North America. The acquisition will provide Steven Charles with the platform and resources to continue to develop innovative dessert products at scale for its blue-chip customer base. Steven Charles will continue to be operated by its current management team led by President Rebecca O’Hara. Financial terms of the private transaction were not disclosed.

Founded in 1995, Steven Charles crafts unique and memorable desserts for restaurant and retail clients. The Company is known for its culinary innovation and development of imaginative signature desserts made from the highest-quality ingredients.

“As the leading premium desserts platform in North America, we are investing behind category-defining dessert manufacturers like Steven Charles to help them reach their full potential,” said Paul Lapadat, CEO of Dessert Holdings. “Steven Charles has a heritage of creating and commercializing



Photo | Jamilla Yipp Photography

award-winning desserts and that commitment to excellence in innovation and service has fostered long-standing relationships with a number of the leading foodservice and retail operators in North America. We see an incredible opportunity to supplement these strengths to support Steven Charles’ domestic growth while also investing to expand the business globally.”

“Dessert Holdings has a complementary product portfolio to ours and brings capital and expertise that will

help us accelerate our growth journey,” said Rebecca O’Hara, President of Steven Charles. “Steven and Charles are proud and excited to hand the company over to the capable hands of Dessert Holdings, who will continue to value what makes Steven Charles so special as we are aligned on a strategy that preserves our

commitment to culinary innovation and extraordinary service for our discerning customers.”

Steven Fabos and Charles Kosmont shared a dream of building a unique bakery that would bring gourmet desserts to restaurants and supermarkets. Steve began the journey in 1995, and Charles joined the helm 18 years ago. Together they partnered over the years to develop that vision into a reality.

“I have loved the creativity and working with the team that brings joy and fun to so many,” said Kosmont. “We want to thank our integral partners who helped make this happen, especially our staff, who helped to build this company to what it is today. We look forward to seeing the continued growth and success of the Company and know the future will be even more incredible,” added Fabos.

Steven Charles adds to Dessert Holdings’ portfolio of premium,

See **DESSERT** page 10



## WATERFRONT RESORT AUCTION

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# Clarion Events Food & Beverage group in-person trade shows / conferences for 2022

Shelton, CT – In 2022 all Clarion Events Food & Beverage Group trade shows and conferences will be held in person, bringing back together thousands of foodservice, hospitality, specialty beverage, retail and grocery industry professionals with leading suppliers at eight events across the United States. The trade shows and conferences are built on three pillars, providing industry professionals with the tools, education and products needed to help them succeed.

“From New York to Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Chicago, Seattle and Florida we look forward to welcoming back our exhibitors, speakers, partners and attendees for eight reinvented and reimagined trade shows offering special events, world

class education and valuable networking opportunities,” said Rita Ugianskis, Vice President, Clarion Events Food & Beverage Group. “Whether you’re an independent restaurant or café owner, grocer, food retailer, quick-serve restaurant operator, chef, caterer, baker, bar or nightclub operator, hospital, hotel or commercial foodservice personnel we invite you to register to join us at one of the following events.”

**About Clarion Events:** Clarion Events (us.clarionevents.com) produces 37 events across 13 sectors of both trade and consumer events. Clarion Events acquired PennWell in early 2018, bringing 4 Tradeshow 200 events into the U.S. portfolio and super-charging the already rapid growth. Clarion Events has offices in Trumbull, CT; Kennesaw, GA; Boca Raton, FL; Tacoma, WA, and Fairlawn, NJ.

## The NGA Show ♦ February 27 – March 1, 2022

At the brand-new Caesar’s Forum Convention Center in Las Vegas.

## The International Restaurant & Foodservice Show of New York Co-located with Coffee Fest NY ♦ March 6-8, 2022

At the Javits Convention Center, New York, NY.

Sponsored by The New York State Restaurant Association.

## Coffee Fest Chicago ♦ June 24-25, 2022

At the Navy Pier in Chicago, IL.

## Western Foodservice & Hospitality Expo, co-located with Coffee Fest LA ♦ August 28-30, 2022

At the Los Angeles Convention Center in California.

Sponsored by: The California Restaurant Association

## Coffee Fest PNW / Seattle ♦ October 7-8, 2022

At the Arch Conference Center at the Washington State Convention Center in Seattle, WA.

## The Florida Restaurant & Lodging Show

Will truly be reinvented in 2022. Additional information about the new name, new location and new theme will be announced shortly.

Sponsored by the Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association

## Behaving badly from page 5

- ♦ Tend to have more overall training in conflict resolution
- ♦ Have a lot more latitude when it comes to offering compensation

Equally important, managers have the authority to ask customers to leave. When a situation can’t be solved, this is sometimes the only option left. You might lose the sale, but with that diner out of the way, you and your team can focus on the customers who matter.

You may have noticed that communication is a recurring theme in many of these conflict resolution steps. Listening, repeating, and

staying calm aren’t skills that come naturally to everyone. This is why employee training is so important. The more simulations and role-play you do, the more comfortable your team may feel if customer complaints pop up in the future. **TR**

**About Mihir Korke:** Mihir is Head of Acquisition at [Clover Network](#), a leader in small business credit card processing and POS systems. Clover specializes in restaurant, retail, and personal and professional service payment solutions. With desktop and mobile POS systems, contactless payments, solutions for curbside pickup and online ordering, loyalty and rewards, Clover has multiple solutions to meet your business’s needs

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# What's Going On from page 3

built into the design of Dishcraft's technology. According to David Biderman of the Solid Waste Foundation of North America, residential trash increased about 25% during the COVID pandemic. Reusable dishware is a plausible, and now proven, solution to this alarming environmental problem. Dishcraft can be contacted online at [dishcraft.com](http://dishcraft.com).

**Chef Henry Hane has opened his new upscale restaurant, Jattö.** Located at 223 NW 23rd St in Miami, Jattö, is a play on the Peruvian term jato, meaning "home", brings together flavors from Peru, Colombia, and Spain. Our offer includes rotating food and high-end cocktails, prepared with meats and produce from Miami-based farms and purveyors. He has another restaurant in Miami as well. Visit [Jattomiami.com](http://Jattomiami.com) for all details.

Carpigiani, an Ali Group Company, and global leader in the production of equipment for fresh ice cream, gelato, pastry, and much more, has introduced the state-of-the-art **Carpigiani by Victory Ice Cream Hardening Freezer Model ICH-1D.** This new model is a two-half door top and bottom freezer unit with fast pulldown temperatures,



ensuring optimal product quality for hardening ice cream, gelato, and other foodservice products.

**Smokey Mo's TX BBQ**, an authentic Texas barbecue chain with 16 locations throughout Central Texas and 21 years of successful corporate operations, announced new members of its leadership team. They will be spearheading a company rebrand, franchise development and expansion and menu refinement. The new team members have deep roots in rowing Texas restaurants, including Rudy's Country Store & Bar-B-Q and Mighty Fine Burgers Fries & Shakes. Craig Haley, president, and Gini Quiroz, vice president of human resources, join the Smokey Mo's team after many years of working together at K&N Management, one of the only two restaurant groups to win the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. Visit the website at [smokeymosbbq.com](http://smokeymosbbq.com).

**Hotel Happenings**  
Poised for an early 2022 opening, **Banyan Cay Resort & Golf** will become



Florida's first Destination by Hyatt hotel and the first full-service Hyatt-branded property in PB County. This new-build luxury resort will boast an upscale West

Indies style imagined by the leading hotel designers at Adache Architects. Guests will be treated to 150 oversized rooms and suites, 22 three-bedroom villas, and a robust menu of amenities. These include a lush spa inspired by West Indies rituals, **two on-site restaurants**, a resort-style swimming pool with a poolside tiki bar and 18 holes of golf on what is Jack Nicklaus' 300th Signature course.

**Cambria Suites** formerly known as Vib Hotel Orlando is under construction on Visitors Circle in Orlando. The project is over 65,000 Sq ft and is a 5-story, 120 room property. Completion date is expected January 2022. Visit [choicehotels.com](http://choicehotels.com).

Beginning summer 2022, **The Seagate Hotel & Spa** in Delray Beach, will embark on its next chapter and undergo major renovations to its 154 guestrooms. Along with a full public-space redesign, the property will add new restaurant and lounge concepts. In addition, the Beach Club will be reimagined with an eye towards creating a spectacular beach and culinary experience.

A new hotel under the Red Roof Inn flagship, **Spot X by Red Collection** opened in November at 12235 Regency Village Dr in Orlando. The building was formerly supposed to be a Best Western Glo Hotel, but recently the 67,774 SF, 154 room property changed owners. [redroof.com](http://redroof.com).

Founded in 2019 by Long Island born brothers Peter Izzo and Bobby Pokora, **HYD (HowYa Doin') Hospitality Group—the group behind Peter's Pizzeria**, will open another new location of its famed pizza shop in South Florida. Debuting in Boca in November 2021, it will be coming to Pompano Beach in Spring 2022. These are a natural extension of the brand, as the owners opened the first outpost of Peter's Pizzeria in Port St. Joe in Northwest Florida earlier.

**Orchid Bay Shopping Center** in Orlando, now has new tenants to replace the closed down CiCi's Pizzeria and Golden Corral locations. An **Asian Cuisine Marketplace** will be occupying the 11,600 SF former Golden Corral

location and will have multiple operators and a full bar under one room. It is expected to be completed this month or in early 2022.

**Parrillada Familiar Da Silva**, a Venezuelan Steakhouse, will be taking over the former 6,000 SF CiCi's Pizzeria and is expected to open in January 2022. [dasilvasteakhouse.com](http://dasilvasteakhouse.com)

**Harry's, an iconic New York City steakhouse and cocktail bar**, located on Hanover Square in lower Manhattan, celebrated by Wall Street's

Institution for half of a century, will be opening a Florida location in Rosemary Square, West Palm Beach, in the summer of 2022. The restaurant will feature the original Harry's signature beef wellington and martini bar. Photo provided by Resy.com.

Email your company's **What's Going On** info to [terri@trnusa.com](mailto:terri@trnusa.com).



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## Dessert from page 8

clean-label dessert companies and brands including The Original Cakerie, Lawler's and Atlanta Cheesecake Company. Bain Capital Private Equity acquired Dessert Holdings in June 2021 with a goal to support its growth acceleration through organic expansion and select acquisition opportunities.

"With our investment in Dessert Holdings, we have the privilege of backing Paul and his team as they build the leading premium dessert manufacturing company in North America, and the acquisition of Steven Charles is a perfect fit for that vision," said Adam Nebesar, a Managing Director at Bain Capital Private Equity. "We look forward to partnering with Rebecca and the Steven Charles team to support their growth ambitions."

Barclays also served as lead financial advisor, PwC served as

accounting advisor, and Ropes & Gray LLP as legal advisor to Dessert Holdings. Houlihan Lokey served as financial advisor, and Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP served as legal advisor to Steven Charles.

**About Dessert Holdings:** Dessert Holdings® is North America's premium dessert company, recognized for providing our retail and foodservice customers with chef-inspired innovative desserts made with real ingredients, a flexible supply chain, and best-in-class service. Based in St. Paul, Minnesota, Dessert Holdings is an umbrella organization of three premium dessert companies and brands: The Original Cakerie, Lawler's Desserts and Atlanta Cheesecake Company. Together, the companies serve more than 250 customers in the United States, Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, South America and Asia.

**About Steven Charles - A Dessert Company:** Steven Charles - A Dessert Company is known for its chef-driven innovation grounded in curiosity, inspiration, and expertise, coupled with high-quality ingredients, resulting in the world's most enjoyable, memorable desserts for foodservice outlets, hospitality operators, retail and in-store bakeries.

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# Protect the planet and your sensitive data by recycling old electronics

Trenton, NJ - Whether a small company handling purchase orders and finances, a giant legal office dealing with sensitive lawsuits for high-profile clients or a consumer trying to figure out what to do with their old home computer, all of these examples are united by the need for efficient and reliable IT asset disposition (ITAD) and e-waste recycling solutions. In response, TerraCycle Regulated Waste (TCRW), a commercial recycling solution provider that specializes in the collection and repurposing of complex regulated waste streams, has launched a suite of products and services designed carry out the compliant and eco-friendly disposal of unwanted electronics while ensuring proper data destruction.

"Since the start of the pandemic and the trend of companies embracing work-from-home schedules, IT departments, no matter the size or the industry require some form of dependable data sanitization," said Kevin Flynn, Global Vice President of TerraCycle Operations and Director of TerraCycle Regulated Waste. "The need to outfit workers with the latest remote-ready tech while reliably managing data on old devices and recycling them appropriately has exploded. In answer, TerraCycle Regulated Waste has

created a robust suite of services that allow businesses and consumers alike to streamline their e-waste recycling requirements and ITAD needs with the type of turnkey recycling solutions that TerraCycle is known for."



## TERRACYCLE REGULATED WASTE

### ◆ E-Waste Mail Back Recycling:

The EasyPak Electronics Recycling Container - Serialized and the EasyPak WFH & Workspace Electronics Recycling Container - Serialized were designed to offer a one-step solution to recycle any e-waste that can be powered-on or is home to a chip or board parts. This includes, but is not limited to, LEDs, computers, monitors, telecom gear, fax machines and televisions. These safe, convenient and data-secure

methods for the recycling and disposition of electronics include a detailed report with make/model/serial numbers of the disposed of items that provides proof that they securely recycled.

### ◆ Bulk E-Waste Freight Recycling:

The BulkPak E-waste Serialized Recycling Kit offers IT managers a turnkey effective solution for the recycling bulk quantities of e-waste that can be powered-on or is home to a chip or board parts, including CPU's, monitors and e-scrap.

### ◆ ITAD Machine Solutions:

For individual purchase and utilized by TCRW to process the e-waste received in through the mail-back and freight solutions, TCRW offers two state-of-the-art systems that ensure that the data on the discarded electronic devices never fall into the wrong hands. They include:

◆ At the touch of a button, the Destroy-It Hard Drive Punch makes discarded hard drives from PCs, laptops, notebooks, printers, copiers, and PDAs unreadable by punching a hardened steel die completely through the drive.

◆ **Degaussing Machine:** To support the growing demand for user-friendly data erasure technology, TCRW is now a proud supplier of high speed and economical degaussing

solutions. This new line of degaussing products will provide your organization with the assurance that your media and data-bearing devices no longer contain any confidential information before being sent off site for recycling.

As an added incentive and level of security, TerraCycle Regulated Waste provides customers with a Certificate of Destruction to verify that the waste has been dismantled and all data storage components have been destroyed pursuant to all applicable laws including environmental and waste management regulations. Additionally, the destruction process will also ensure that all data equipment is destroyed and unusable in its original state. **TR**

*About TerraCycle Regulated Waste: TerraCycle is an innovative waste management company with a mission to eliminate the idea of waste®. The TerraCycle Regulated Waste division offers environmentally-sound recycling of universal and regulated waste. From innovative EasyPak fluorescent bulb shipping boxes with integrated mercury seals to the BulbEater® series of bulb crushers, TerraCycle Regulated Waste provides a complete line of lamp recycling options. Medwaste and sharps recycling programs by TerraCycle Regulated Waste utilize decontamination systems that eliminate incineration and allow for the reclamation of valuable materials from syringes and vials. TerraCycle - terracycle.com - has won over 200 awards for sustainability and has donated over \$44 million to schools and charities since its founding more than 15 years ago and was named #10 in Fortune magazine's list of 52 companies Changing the World. For more info contact: Alex Payne / alex.payne@terraceycle.com or call TerraCycle at 609.393.4252 Extension 3710.*

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## FTC from page 1

it "blocked or removed 55 million policy-violating reviews."

**This gives you a sense of the scale of the problem.**

Consumers have become increasingly aware of fake reviews over the past few years. This is partly because of increasing media coverage. Uberall consumer survey data show that now two-thirds (67%) of U.S. consumers are concerned about review fraud; however, most people are unable to spot fake reviews through ordinary observation.

What surprises many people is discovering that the majority of review fraud is being perpetrated by or on behalf of businesses themselves. In other words, businesses are generating (or buying) fake positive reviews to improve their visibility and online reputations. In this context that means restaurant owners.

**Enter the FTC and its warning to brands and advertisers.**

The agency has been working on a strategy for months to go after online review fraud. The major challenge it faces is Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, which protects online platforms and search engines from liability for user-generated content (e.g., reviews). The FTC can't go after Google or Yelp, so it's relegated to going after individual violators.

Each potential "misleading endorsement" (fake review) brings potential penalties of \$43,792. So ten fake reviews could mean a fine of more than \$430,000. However, the FTC has yet to bring an action for review fraud under this framework.

As a practical matter, pursuing thousands of independent, local restaurants who've cheated their reviews isn't feasible. So the FTC is looking for larger or more egregious examples of online review fraud to deter future behavior. A national or regional restaurant franchise with significant review fraud, that would bring a meaningful financial penalty and national news, would be an "ideal target" for the agency.

**We'll wait to see if that happens. It may take a little while.**

In the meantime, consumers will continue to read and use online restaurant reviews – but with increasing caution and skepticism. That will boost the stock of trusted editorial reviews and roundups as a hedge against fraud. **TR**

*About Greg Sterling: Greg is the VP of Market Insights for Uberall. He is a recognized expert on a range of digital marketing topics, including SMB SaaS and local marketing. He was also a contributing editor for Search Engine Land for 14 years. Before Uberall, Sterling was VP of Strategy for trade association LSA (now Localogy). Prior to entering the world of digital media, Sterling was an attorney and practiced civil litigation in San Francisco.*

# 9 steps to retaining employees



John Tsochl ♦ Restaurateur and founder of BellyMelly

By the end of 2021, the labor shortage had reached epic proportions, with an estimated 10.7 million unfilled jobs. Everywhere I went, businesses displayed signs saying they were hiring. Restaurants and other businesses reduced their hours of operations because they didn't have enough employees to take care of their customers.

Considering this situation, I want to share with you some steps you can take to retain your current employees and attract new ones.

- 1. Train them.** Give your employees what they need to do their jobs. There is nothing more frustrating than tackling a project when you don't have what's necessary to successfully complete it. When you train your employees on customer service, you are showing them you value them by investing the time and money to ensure they will be successful. That training must be consistent and continuous in order to make an impact.
- 2. Listen to them.** When employees feel they have no input into what they do and how they are required to do it, they become discouraged. Ask them for feedback and be open and honest in responding to their

concerns. Ask what you can do to make their jobs easier and, as a result, make them more enjoyable. Ask what their goals are within the company—and what you can do to help them achieve those goals.

*When the epidemic hit in 2020, many companies had to allow employees to work from their homes.*

- 3. Respect them.** We've all, at one time in our lives, had bosses who lost their tempers, berated employees in front of others, or disrespected employees in other ways. If you must have a conversation with an employee who is not doing well, do it behind closed doors and do it respectfully. Employees need to feel loved, valued, and appreciated every day.
- 4. Praise them.** When you praise an employee, do it publicly; it will serve

as a motivator for other employees. Be specific and sincere. Do it in a timely manner, and do it often. If you wait six months, that praise loses its thunder. Be sincere and specific.

- 5. Recognize them.** We all like to be recognized for doing a job well. Unfortunately, many employees are recognized only when they make mistakes. Try to catch employees who are doing a good job and thank them for it. My friend, Steve, is an accountant and recently left his job after just 45 days. Why? During his performance review he received only negative comments—even though he had performed well enough to uncover embezzlement in the company.
- 6. Motivate them.** Money can definitely be a motivator—but it's usually short lived. You can pay your employees extremely well, but if you don't motivate them they will underperform and, eventually, they will leave you.
- 7. Coach them.** Become a coach, a nurturer. Just as athletic coaches must bring team members together to perform at their highest levels, you must bring your employees together and get them to work as a team to achieve

the goals you have set for them.

- 8. Be flexible.** When the epidemic hit in 2020, many companies had to allow employees to work from their homes. Those employees proved that they could be just as—if not more—productive as they would have been in the office. Now you might be faced with employees who are having difficulty finding daycare or are facing other issues and would like to work at least part time from their homes. You would do well to make accommodations to help them deal with those issues.
- 9. Conduct exit interviews with employees who leave your company.** Why? Because they will give you insight about what went wrong. While most employees will tell you they are leaving because they can make more money somewhere else, most are leaving for other reasons. When they share those reasons with you, you will have the opportunity to evaluate them and determine how you and others in supervisory positions can adjust your own attitudes and behaviors and help you retain employees. 

By: John Tsochl and the Service Quality Institute [www.customer-service.com](http://www.customer-service.com).

## Why industry leaders are using our monthly Restaurant Leads Report

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	Name	Info	Address	City	Zip	Phone	Opening	Email
2	Owner Beti in the Lake		9938 Unive	Orlando	32819	407 888-1190		bethsburgerbar@yahoo.com
3	Chef Driver brand new		1481 E Irlo	St. Cloud	34771	407 556-5137 ext. 407		chris@froz-n.com
4	Owners An specializing		1375 S Serr	Orlando	32807	407 704-2248		info@tasteofyucatan.com
5	Owner Scol was Knead		1173 Edgev	Jacksonville	32205	904 398-10 Spring 201		info@maplestreetbiscuits.com
6	Peter Tsialli also 15,000		728 Northv	Miami	33127	305 638-70 TBD checke		info@woodtavern.com
7	Jose Garcia		1657 N Mia	Miami	33136	786 329-08 Nov - Dec 2		info@taulafresh.com
8	Chef Marcc Poinciana F		340 Royal F	Palm Beach	33480	212 966-27 Nov - Dec 2		Marco.barbisotti@santambroeus.com
9	Owners Chi was McGov		321 West F	Decatur	30030	404 469-6863		scoutoakhursthiring@gmail.com
10	Co-owner Victor Erazo		3975 Holco	Norcross	30092	470 395-7936		victor@peachtree-cafe.com
11	Elijah Sleigt (NY Based)		3150 Hwy 5	Newnan	30263	678 423-8694		duffsnewnan@gmail.com
12	Chef Jason was Mezza		2751 Lavist	Decatur	30033	404 330-83 Nov - Dec 2		hello@kitchensixoakgrove.com
13	Daniel Kimj (they have		3492 Satel	Duluth	30097	770 302-22 Late Nov - 1		cs@boxete.com
14	Owners De The old Sm		282 Norma	Valdosta	31601	850 629-40 TBD checke		Wahooseafoodgrill.tally@gmail.com
15	Owner Sha (right now		495 White	Atlanta	30303	404 963-14 TBD checked		early Nov

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## BOH *from page 1*

A strong back-of-house platform will both act as the data warehouse for operators and have critical reports to give people at all levels of the business the information they need at a glance.

Operators looking to hone their competitive edge in 2022 will need strong reporting. Better data will enable operators to work proactively, spotting issues and trends to help all locations, and avoiding crises that threaten customer loyalty.

### 3. New emphasis on wellness

The pandemic has changed the landscape for employee health and wellness long after COVID-19 and its many variants eventually subside. The health assessments and emphasis on different safety and wellness protocols are paving the way for an ongoing focus on wellness. Whether that is broader health assessments, signage about wellness protocols to assure customers or stricter sanitation, customer sentiment favors more information about what restaurants are doing to protect them and restaurants will respond.

### 4. Making the move to mobile

Restaurant employees are always on the go, even at the corporate level, and the more they can access back of house on a phone or tablet, the better. No restaurant locations have room for legacy desktop software, and as new generations join the workforce, they will expect to be able to access digital tools on their phones.

The delivery and online ordering tech many restaurants added in 2020 is mobile based. Restaurants who want employees to adopt new technology are looking toward a single, mobile solution rather than multiple systems they have to learn or clunky desktops to access. A move toward

streamlining BOH will also include streamlining the way employees will access it.

### 5. Changing up staffing to meet off-prem demand

Takeout and delivery spiked as the pandemic began, but it was only an acceleration of an existing trend toward off-prem. Although dine-in came back somewhat, off-prem is still higher than it was pre-pandemic and will continue to rise.

As a result, restaurants are shifting staffing to keep more back-of-house employees on the schedule to help manage the continuing demand for take-out and delivery. They are also turning to labor and scheduling tools to better allocate the labor they have, scheduling more in alignment with high-demand days and times.

Back-of-house has been on the backburner for years as brands fine-tuned POS and then scrambled to add off-prem tech in 2020. But 2022 is shaping up to see forward-thinking brands make big investments in BOH. Operators are seeing that back-of-house is still open to optimization and, if they want to find more points of profitability, they will need to get a BOH that works with their tech stack and empowers employees to maintain best practices. This will not only help drive improvements in a labor crunch and a pandemic but will put best practices in place that will continue to pay off as business finds its new normal. **TR**

*About Greg Staley: Greg is the CEO of SynergySuite, a back-of-house restaurant management platform. Greg focuses on facilitating better visibility and increased profitability for restaurant chains through the use of intelligent, integrated back-of-house technology. For more information, contact Greg at greg@synergysuite.com.*

## Culture *from page 7*

can help run the business, it's a major change in the company culture.

5. Be consistent. It is so important that when you implement systems, even the minor three mentioned earlier, you pay attention to them on a daily basis. I often ask people, "Why do we have managers?" The answer is to ensure the process is working while allowing you the freedom to not have to be the only one who does.

When you hold people accountable and check on things every day, you are telling them this is what's going to happen to everyone. You are changing your company culture. There's no favoritism. It's the same rules, the same systems, the same way every single day, no matter who you are or how long you've worked there.

When you train your people, when you have managers ensuring the process is working, when you are willing to hold people accountable, when you are willing to invest time, money and effort into learning and implementing systems, and

you're willing to be consistent on all fronts, you, are changing your company culture, a culture where everyone is treated fairly. A culture where systems are part of how you do things daily, where accountability isn't a dirty word and where your company culture makes you an employer of choice.

It's the people part that takes the time. You can put clipboard systems up in a moment. But training people and going through all this, changing your company culture, changing how you operate your restaurant, as team members change, as your managers change, your restaurant culture changes, too, and your restaurant becomes much easier to run. Your turnover rate drops like a rock, your profitability increases and, ultimately, your family gets to see you.

Remember as you work toward your goals for your restaurant that the success will come when you establish the right company culture. **TR**

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# Today's Restaurant

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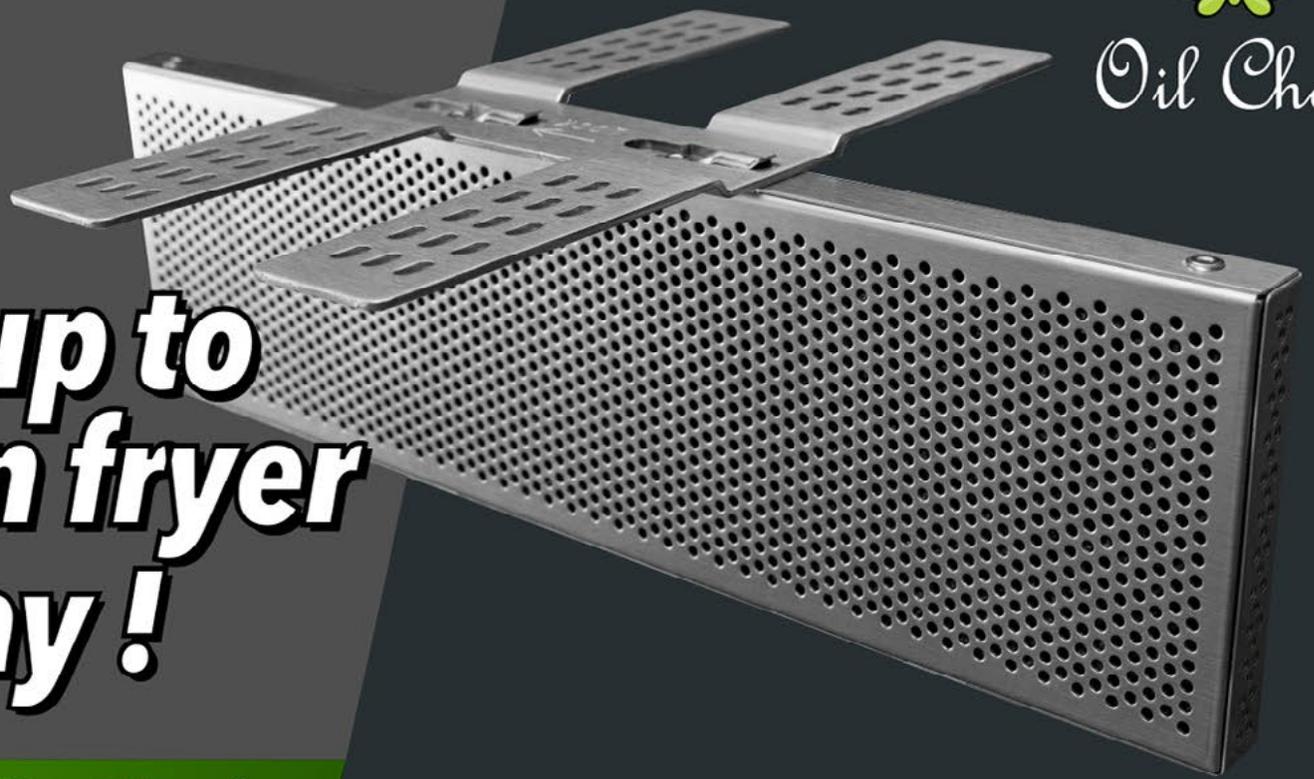
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