

Today's Restaurant

THE FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY AUTHORITY

VOLUME 28

Appetizers

One reason why your food cost is so high



QSR traffic gains in May stabilizes restaurants



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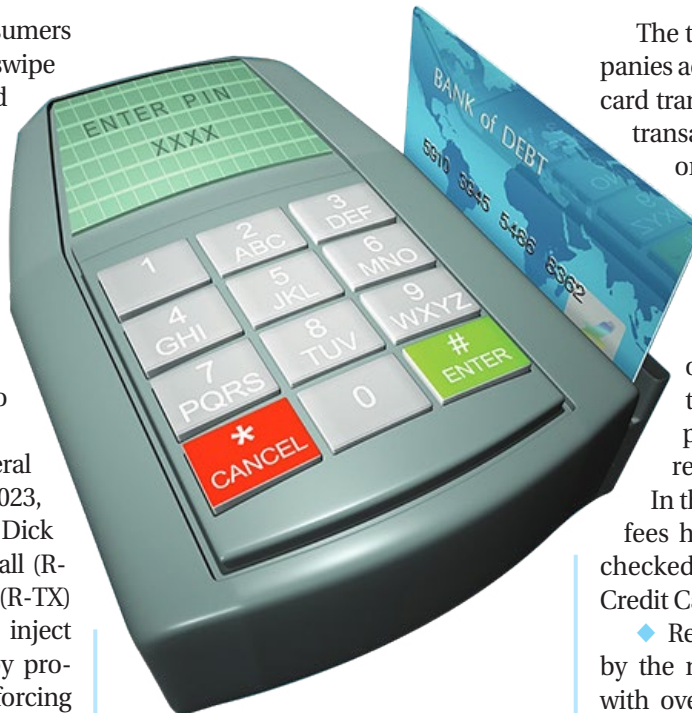
Credit Card Competition Act lets businesses pick payment networks

Competition in credit card fees would save restaurant operators billions every year

Washington, DC - Many consumers don't realize that each time they swipe their credit card, to pay for a good or service, the business owner has to pay an additional percentage of the total bill to route the transaction. Unfortunately, due to a duopoly in the credit card processing system, the fees have been spiraling out of control, harming business owners across the nation who have no choice but to pay.

The bipartisan and bicameral Credit Card Competition Act of 2023, introduced in June, by Sens. Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Roger Marshall (R-KS) and Reps. Lance Gooden (R-TX) and Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) would inject competition into this process by prohibiting card issuers from forcing restaurants to use the issuer's processing network. This change would drive down processing costs for both operators and diners alike, saving U.S. businesses and consumers an estimated \$11 billion a year.

"Swipe fees are one of the most expensive costs restaurant operators have to manage – behind food and labor costs – and being able to accept credit cards is essential to running a restaurant," said



Sean Kennedy, executive vice president of Public Affairs for the National Restaurant Association. "The Credit Card Competition Act would empower restaurant owners to choose the most cost effective and secure network to route a credit card transaction. The impact of this would be significant – saving restaurant operators and consumers billions of dollars a year."

The two dominant credit card companies account for over 80% of all credit card transactions in the U.S. and those transactions can only be processed on their network. This means that restaurants that want to accept these credit cards do not have a choice but to pay the processing fee set by these companies. The lack of competition means these two companies can effectively price-fix how much it costs restaurants to run a credit card.

In the past decade the cost of these fees has more than doubled – unchecked by market competition. The Credit Card Competition Act would:

- ◆ Require that credit cards issued by the nation's largest banks – those with over \$100 billion in assets – are able to be routed through at least two unaffiliated networks.
- ◆ Require that those banks offer a non-dominant network choice, creating competition and allowing smaller companies to compete in the credit card processing marketplace. This "dual routing" requirement already exists for debit cards and has saved

See **CCCA** page 12

Implement simple safety practices to protect against an outbreak

By Stefan Burkey and Placito Miceli

Food supply in the United States is among the safest in the world. Yet states across the country are hit with multiple foodborne illness outbreaks every year, with California leading the pack, followed by Ohio, Washington and Florida.

In 2022, recalls stemmed from a whole host of ingredients, from raw oysters to salad greens to vanilla ice cream.

Restaurateurs must do what they can to minimize the risk of an outbreak in their own kitchens – or face the consequences. The best way to manage that risk is by increasing attention on food safety practices, including anything food service workers do to ensure that the contaminants that can cause foodborne illness are not present.

Poor safety practices can lead to serious illness and even death, as well as negatively impact a restaurant's bottom line. Restaurant owners and operators



Stefan Burkey



Placito Miceli

must take a team-based approach, working with their managers and other workers to prevent foodborne illness from spreading.

By focusing on three areas of food safety – good hygiene, good sanitation, and proper food handling practices – you can help ensure foodborne illness stays out of your kitchen.

Practice good hygiene

Since food workers handle so much food, they are likely to be blamed for spreading any germs. As a result, the

best way to prevent the spread of foodborne illness in your kitchen is by establishing strong expectations around cleanliness – and enforcing them.

Anyone who comes into contact with food must meet your requirements for food safety, without exception. Standard food safety guidelines include regular handwashing, as well as expectations around protective clothing (including clean aprons, gloves, and hair nets).

See **FOOD SAFETY** page 8

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There were several Covid relief programs enacted to help businesses operate throughout the pandemic (Paycheck Protection Program, Restaurant Revitalization Fund, Employee Retention Credit, etc.). Initially, PPP loans appeared easier to qualify for but the IRS only allowed businesses to pick either ERC or PPP for relief - not both. Now, the ERC program remains available even if you already got PPP Loans and businesses are also eligible even if they didn't suffer a drop in revenue.

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Appell Pie

What are the uses of AI in restaurants?

Howard Appell ♦ Today's Restaurant Publisher

It's almost impossible to read an article today without it mentioning some aspect of AI, artificial intelligence. The military is using it in the design of fighting robots and students are using it to write their reports causing a shift in how teachers can grade students. Oral exams are being used once again to make sure that AI doesn't become the standard by which grades are formulated.

We soon will not be able to avoid it and actually we have been using it in certain situations for a long period of time, but what are the uses for the restaurant and hospitality business?

AI is increasingly being used in various aspects of the restaurant industry to improve efficiency, customer experience, and overall operations. Here are some common uses of AI in restaurants:

1. Menu and recipe optimization: AI can analyze customer preferences, sales data, and ingredient availability to suggest menu items and optimize recipes. It can help identify popular dishes, recommend profitable menu combinations, and even suggest ingredient substitutions based on availability.

2. Customer service and chatbots: AI-powered chatbots can handle customer inquiries, reservations, and provide personalized recommendations. They can assist with menu choices, dietary restrictions, and handle basic customer service tasks, freeing up staff to focus on more complex interactions.

3. Voice assistants: Restaurants are adopting voice assistants like Amazon Alexa or Google Assistant to provide voice-activated ordering systems, answer customer questions, and automate tasks like taking reservations or providing information on wait times.

4. Predictive analytics for inventory management: AI can analyze historical sales data, seasonal trends, and other factors to predict future demand for ingredients and supplies. This helps in

optimizing inventory levels, reducing waste, and ensuring the availability of popular items.

5. Enhanced kitchen operations: AI-powered systems can monitor kitchen equipment, track cooking times, and send alerts for maintenance or when food is ready. It can help streamline operations, reduce errors, and improve overall kitchen efficiency.

AI algorithms can analyze historical data, external factors like weather or events, and predict future demand patterns.

6. Personalized marketing and loyalty programs: AI can analyze customer data, preferences, and behaviors to create targeted marketing campaigns. It can identify customer segments, recommend personalized offers or promotions, and help restaurants build customer loyalty.

7. Food quality and safety monitoring: AI can assist in monitoring food safety and quality by analyzing data from sensors and cameras. It can detect anomalies, identify potential risks, and alert staff in real-time, ensuring compliance with health and safety standards.

8. Demand forecasting and pricing optimization: AI algorithms can analyze historical data, external factors like weather or events, and predict future demand patterns. This information can help restaurants adjust pricing strategies, plan staffing levels, and optimize overall operations.

See **APPELL PIE** page 6

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P.O. Box 273264, Boca Raton, FL 33427-3264
 (561) 620-8888 ♦ Fax (561) 620-8821
howard@trnusa.com ♦ www.trnusa.com

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What's Going On

Important new products, corporate news and industry events

Wild Heaven Beer will open a third brewery and taproom location at the Toco Hills Shopping Center in 2024. At the new site, there will be an on-site brewery, distillery, and farm winery program, allowing house-made beer, wine, and cocktails to be offered, according to a Facebook post from the brewery. Fox Bros. Bar-B-Q will operate the kitchen featuring their well-known smoked meats.



Diana and Scott Willis have opened a Foxtail Coffee Co. location North Naples, with plans to open 10 more franchise locations in the region, according to a Gulfshore Business report. Foxtail Coffee Co. has expanded rapidly since opening its first location in 2016. The North Naples location represents the franchise-focused company's 50th store.



Multiconcept operator **Dine Brands Global** will add another restaurant chain to its portfolio when they acquire Fuzzy's Taco Shop from Experiential Brands.



Barfly® Mixology Gear has introduced the latest addition to its line of professional-grade bar tools, the new Fine Mesh Spring Bar Strainer. This strainer combines the features of a spring bar strainer and a fine mesh strainer, providing the ability to double strain drinks without the need for an additional step. The design allows the strainer to effectively remove ice chips, fruit, and herbs. "We are thrilled to introduce the Fine Mesh Spring Bar Strainer to our line of quality bar tools," said Joe Flaherty, Senior Vice President, Barfly Mixology Gear. "It combines the best features of two types of strainers into one, making it more efficient and allowing for more speed behind the bar. With its exceptional construction and ease of use, we believe that this strainer will quickly become a favorite among bartenders everywhere." For more information visit www.barflybymercer.com. Barfly Mixology Gear is committed to providing high-quality barware for the professional bartender and home enthusiast. Produced and owned by Mercer Culinary, a second-generation family business, which manufactures and supplies cutlery and accessories for the professional culinary market.

Carpigiani, an Ali Group company, announced OP Trade Solutions LLC as its new distributor for Austin and San Antonio, Texas. The addition of this new network partner provides an added resource to Carpigiani North America to promote and service its frozen dessert equipment. Carpigiani offers a full line of soft-serve machines, batch freezers and display cases. An Austin-based company, OP Trade Solutions has been in the market for 18



years, selling gelato and coffee equipment driven by the founder's passion for Italian delights. Known for its customer service and high-quality equipment distribution, the company recently expanded its portfolio to include food trailers and foodservice equipment. OP Trade Solutions distributes and services other well-known brands in the foodservice industry. "OP Trade Solutions provides a talented and experienced team

along with a showroom and test kitchen in Austin to accommodate customer demonstrations, both of which are great assets for Carpigiani's future growth," said Carpigiani North America Director of Sales and Network Development, Leandra Olivotti.



Hoffmaster, a leading manufacturer of premium foodservice single-use tableware, launches Earthwise Wood Cutlery Dispenser System and Earthwise Compostable Plant-Based Straws. Developed in



See **WHAT'S GOING ON** page 8

See **WHAT'S GOING ON** page 8

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One reason your food cost is so high

David Scott Peters ♦ Today's Restaurant Contributor

Does your restaurant food cost look high to you? As we've all seen, the cost of goods that you sell has skyrocketed with high inflation and logistical issues everywhere you look. While a lot of factors are contributing to increasing costs in the restaurant industry, it's still possible you're using the wrong numbers when calculating your food cost and your food cost might not be as high as you think.

In a restaurant, there are three things that cost you the most amount of money. First is an empty chair. Yes, an empty chair. You pay all these bills to have people come into your restaurant, but if nobody is sitting in there with a wallet to pay you, then your restaurant is costing you money.

Next is labor cost and then food cost, especially if you're a restaurant where food is 60, 70, 80, 90 percent of what you

sell. While food costs have been doing nothing but going up, there are times where I find that I'm working on budgets with a new member, going through line by line on that budget, and we get to the food cost and it looks really high. When this happens, I know they're probably using the wrong number.

Here is what I mean. The first question I ask a restaurant owner when we get to this point is whether they take inventories on a weekly basis to calculate their food cost, or are they just using purchases for their number? Probably nine times out of 10, the restaurant owners who go through my coaching program are using their purchases divided by sales.

This is the wrong number. Your food cost calculation is not what you purchased divided by sales. It's what you use. The correct food cost calculation is beginning inventory plus purchases minus ending and that gives you use. You must take inventories for value. Purchases divided by sales is not food cost because the change in inventory can be too radical. You could have purchased a ton of product but had really low sales. When this happens your food cost looks falsely high. And the next month, your sales are high, but you had so much food on the shelves you didn't have to order that month that it makes your food cost look falsely low. Instead, you want to determine what actually leaves the shelves to get the accurate food cost number.


The next question I ask restaurant owners is are they separating their products on their food distributor invoices for everything that's not food. If it's not food, what else would it be? Janitorial supplies, paper supplies, small wares, equipment, etc. You don't sell bleach. You don't sell toilet paper (usually) or tongs. These are all things that could be on the same invoice from your broad line distributor. And if you don't separate the food products from everything else, your numbers show that all as product. That's the simplest way to think of it: When you hear cost of goods sold, it's the cost of the goods

you sell. So, when you sell a plate with food on it, it's only food, no janitorial and no paper.

Food is food and cost of goods sold is the cost of the product that you bring in divided by gross sales (the ring of the register before discounts). So how do you ensure your food cost is accurate?

One, you must take weekly food inventories for value, not for an order. You're not counting stuff to figure out how much to order. This is for value. That means you need to have a system in place where you know everything on your shelves and what it costs. This is for a product you buy from a distributor or a product you make, such as meal components like onions, soups, sauces, desserts, dressing. It's the products you buy plus the products you make and the value of those things on your shelf.

Two, categorize all your invoices into food, janitorial, paper, small equipment and so on. By the way, did you know you can simplify this process? Automate this process. Find a good cost of goods sold software. You can use it to help you order, take inventory, and make recipe costing cards. All your numbers are automatically input, and you can use the reports to set up shelf-to-sheet inventory so you can take inventory accurately on a weekly basis in under an hour. Doing this means you'll know your food cost within minutes of completing that inventory. Best of all, you'll know your food cost is right.

If your food cost looks high, make sure you're using the right numbers first. If you want to know the right numbers and know what your food cost should be, start taking inventory weekly, separate your order in food vs everything else and then use a cost of goods software to automate it all. 

David Scott Peters is an author, restaurant coach and speaker who coaches restaurant operators how to stop being prisoners of their businesses and to finally financial freedom. His first book, Restaurant Prosperity Formula: What Successful Restaurateurs Do, teaches the systems and traits restaurant owners must develop to run a profitable restaurant. Thousands of restaurants have worked with Peters to transform their businesses. Get his three principles to restaurant success at <http://www.davidscottpeters.com>.

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QSR traffic gains helped to keep U.S. restaurant industry stable in May

Visits to fast casual restaurants grew by 4% year-over-year

Chicago, IL - Quick service restaurants (QSRs) have historically represented the majority share of U.S. restaurant industry traffic, which means as quick service goes, so goes the industry. A 1% increase in quick service restaurant visits in May, representing 82% of all industry traffic, offset full service restaurant traffic declines, keeping the entire restaurant industry stable in the month compared to a year ago, reports Circana, formerly IRI and The NPD Group. Broadline foodservice case unit and dollar shipments to QSRs were up 1%, and total restaurant cases and dollars were up 1% in May compared to a year ago.

The morning meal daypart, which includes the breakfast and A.M. snack



periods, continues to be a traffic driver for QSRs; visits were up 5% in May over a year ago. P.M. snack was also a growth area for the segment, with a visit gain of 5%. Lunch and dinner realized single-digit traffic declines in the month versus a year ago.

Both traditional QSRs, like specialty, sandwich, and snack quick service restaurants, and fast casual restaurants

contributed to May's traffic growth. Visits to traditional QSRs grew by 1% and fast casual restaurant traffic by 4% compared to a year ago. Some of the month's visit growth can be attributed to the addition of QSR traditional and fast casual locations. Locations for traditional QSRs increased by 2.5%, and fast casual chains rose by 2.3%, according to

Circana's Fall 2022 restaurant census that counts locations opened as of September 30, 2022.

Still recovering from steep pandemic-related losses, full service restaurant (FSRs) visits declined by 3% in May compared to a year ago. Major FSR chains fared better than independents, with traffic down 1%, versus independent FSRs' 3% decline.

"The QSR segment extended an impressive winning streak in May with the ninth consecutive month of year-over-year traffic gains. Morning meal continues to drive QSR growth," says David Portalatin, Circana food industry advisor and author of *Eating Patterns in America*. "Full service restaurants continue to face headwinds, but despite the headwinds, several FSR chains are winning by improving on-premises demand and delighting customers with good value and great experiences."

About Circana: Circana is the leading advisor on the complexity of consumer behavior. Through unparalleled technology, advanced analytics, cross-industry data, and deep expertise, we provide clarity that helps almost 7,000 of the world's leading brands and retailers take action and unlock business growth. We understand more about the complete consumer, the complete store, and the complete wallet so our clients can go beyond the data to apply insights, ignite innovation, meet consumer demand, and outpace the competition. Learn more at www.circana.com.

Major FSR chains fared better than independents, with traffic down 1%, versus independent FSRs' 3% decline.

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Appell Pie from page 2

AI can also play a valuable role in staff scheduling for restaurants by automating and optimizing the process. Here are a few ways AI can be used in staff scheduling:

1. Demand Forecasting: AI algorithms can analyze historical data, such as past reservations, foot traffic, and sales patterns, to predict future demand accurately. By considering factors like seasonal variations, holidays, and special events, AI can generate demand forecasts for different time slots, allowing managers to schedule staff accordingly.

2. Employee Availability and Preferences: AI-powered scheduling systems can take into account staff availability and preferences. By integrating with employee calendars or availability databases, AI can automatically identify the most suitable shifts for each employee based on their availability, skillset, and requested time-off. This helps reduce conflicts and improves employee satisfaction.

3. Skill Matching: AI can analyze employee skills, certifications, and training records to ensure the right staff members are assigned to appropriate shifts and roles. This ensures that the restaurant has a balanced and qualified team during different operational periods, optimizing productivity and customer service quality.

4. Compliance and Labor Laws: AI can assist in ensuring compliance

with labor laws and regulations related to scheduling. By considering factors like overtime limits, break requirements, and other legal constraints, AI algorithms can generate schedules that adhere to these regulations, reducing the risk of non-compliance and associated penalties.

5. Real-Time Adjustments: AI scheduling systems can dynamically adapt to real-time changes, such as unexpected staff absences or fluctuations in customer demand. By monitoring employee availability, shift swaps, and operational data, AI can recommend and implement adjustments to the schedule on short notice, minimizing disruptions and maintaining optimal staffing levels.

6. Cost Optimization: AI can consider labor costs, employee wages, and scheduling constraints to optimize staffing levels and minimize labor expenses. By balancing the number of staff members on duty with anticipated customer demand, AI algorithms can generate cost-effective schedules that meet operational needs without overstaffing.

It's important to note that the extent of AI adoption may vary depending on the size and type of restaurant. While larger establishments may have more resources to invest in AI technologies, smaller restaurants can still benefit from basic AI applications like chatbots or menu optimization.



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back to 2005. It has continued as a locally owned and operated company since that time. The team at Big Plate will now join Ace Mart, according to a release announcing the deal.

◆◆◆◆◆
The Middleby Corp. recently stated that it has acquired Filtration Automation Inc., known for its Micron-Pro brand of fry oil filtration systems. Elgin-based Middleby is a global manufacturer of restaurant equipment. The company develops and makes a broad line of solutions used in the commercial food service and food processing industries.

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Chilli No. 5 is a gourmet hot sauce company that was launched by British entrepreneur Rumble

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Ace Mart has acquired Lubbock, Texas-based foodservice supplies dealer Big Plate Restaurant Supply. The move marks the dealer's second acquisition this year; the first was the purchase of Wichita Restaurant Supply Company. Big Plate's history dates

Romagnoli in October 2020 during lockdown because of a lack of healthy spicy sauce options to pair with take-outs and eat-ins. Chilli No. 5's portfolio of 18 artisan hot sauces is inspired by global cuisines and is designed to add pizzazz to a wide range of culinary creations. Designed for gourmands who wish to live a healthy active lifestyle, each hot sauce is made with only the finest ingredients and infused with superfoods, antioxidants, and supplements, as well as Chill No. 5' exclusive five chilli blend. For more info: Online at chilli-no5.com. Or email: chilli@chilli-no5.com. Based in London.



nutritionally smart options. With veggies at the forefront of everything we do, we're excited to continue expanding our reach with easy and nutritious options that prioritize the goodness of veggies."

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Texas-based chain Whataburger is adding several locations across Georgia. The newest location broke ground on Thursday in Walton County. Just within the last two years, Whataburger has opened locations have opened several in GA. "We are thrilled to serve up Whataburger's bold flavors and exceptional hospitality to the Monroe community," said Key Operator Scott Jordan-Wheeler. "The Atlanta market has been incredibly supportive and welcoming, and we look forward to bringing our orange-and-white goodness to the area as we eagerly anticipate opening our doors later this year." Whataburger was founded on August 8, 1950 in Corpus Christi, Texas

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Don the Beachcomber restaurant is set to make its Central Florida debut near Walt Disney World off Hamlin in 2024. There are other locations coming and in the works.

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New trends in the industry this year is that there is a focus on delivering regional cuisines. Plant-based menus are becoming more and more available as diners are continually changing their eating habits. Customers are increasingly interested in trying out new and exotic flavors from around the world, and restaurants are responding by offering a wider range of cuisines from different regions. This trend is also driven by the rise of social media, which has made it easier for dining out as customers can discover restaurants and bars recently opened in their areas.

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Plant-based meat is going international, with demand expected to double in the next 5 years. As Europe and North America demand plateaus, both Asia and South America will supplement growth expectations in the plant-based meat market. Leading domestic companies see this opportunity to expand internationally as their plant-based movement grows. **California-based Before the Butcher is expecting five countries to lead the demand for plant-based proteins** and have ramped up operations to service those areas.

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As consciousness around sustainability begins to grow amongst consumers, more businesses are looking to reduce their environmental footprint by reducing the plastic used in their products. ZeroWater, a leader in water filtration technology, has released a newly designed peel-off lid



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Capital Tacos, which was a small taco shop has turned into a nationally-acclaimed Tex-Mex restaurant franchise, announced what promises to be one of the most significant recent developments in the sector. In an effort to make the brand even more accessible to prospective franchisees, Capital Tacos is officially welcoming the addition of food trailers as an available investment opportunity for new and existing franchisees. Capital Tacos will now allow its franchisees to mix and match between three formats: traditional brick and mortar restaurants, static trailers that serve as permanent locations, and mobile event trailers. This unparalleled level of flexibility enables each franchisee to customize the upfront cost and timeline associated with launching their Capital Tacos franchise, as well as how they direct the growth of their business. Josh Luger is the co-founder. Visit the website for more information.

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Veggies Made Great® (VMG) and Elohi Strategic Advisors (ESA) announced the inauguration of the Veggies Made Great Institutional Sales Division to address the growing foodservice opportunity, headed by industry veteran Mike Ricciardi. Based in Chicago, ESA works with clients for up to two years to design and establish their path to a sustainable, profitable foodservice business that can grow and thrive. VMG joins some of the most well-known and widely distributed plant-forward products in the North American market as graduates of ESA's Foundation®, Accelerated Market Penetration (AMP)®, or Revenue Acceleration (ReV)® programs. ESA was instrumental in creating strategic alliances and helping VMG achieve significant distributor and operator penetration. Elliot Huss, CEO of Veggies Made Great said: "We thank ESA for their hard work and the successes they helped drive, laying the groundwork for us to bring Veggies Made Great to more and more foodservice guests who are looking for healthier and more



Food safety from page 1

In addition, workers should adhere to the following guidelines:

- ◆ Remove jewelry.
- ◆ Keep nails short.
- ◆ Avoid touching the face during food preparation.
- ◆ Put away cell phones and other devices during working hours.
- ◆ Stay at home when you're sick.

Practice good sanitation practices

It all starts with soap and water – literally.

Foodborne illness doesn't spread when food workers are regularly cleaning and sanitizing their workspaces. Yet all too often, workers don't clean thoroughly enough to destroy the germs.

Set standards for sanitation in your kitchen and be sure all workers understand that they must adhere to those standards. Any surface that food touches must be cleaned and sanitized, including tables, walls, bins, appliances, scales and even floor mats.

Require workers to follow these steps for cleaning and sanitizing a workspace:

- ◆ Wet the area and rinse off any visible soil.
- ◆ Scrub the surface with soap and water to remove visible soil.
- ◆ Rinse the surface with water.
- ◆ Use sanitizer according to the manufacturer's directions.

Practice proper food safety handling

The CDC reports that leafy vegetables caused the most foodborne illness in the US, while poultry led to the greatest number of deaths. Food workers must take precautions with the ingredients in the kitchen, as well as the creation of the dishes they're serving.

Food becomes unsafe to eat in a variety of ways, including:

- ◆ When foods are not held or stored at safe temperatures
- ◆ When foods are not cooked or reheated to the correct temperature to eliminate pathogens
- ◆ When hot foods are not cooled properly before being placed in cold storage.

Once again, it's about clear communication of expectations. Be sure all food workers are trained in proper food safety handling practices. Work as a team to keep your workers and your diners safe.

Risk management in the kitchen is quite simple when everyone understands what's at stake. An outbreak coming out of your restaurant is not only bad for your diners, but it's bad for business. If you're unsure whether a dish is safe to serve, just follow the old saying: When it doubt, throw it out. **TR**

About the authors: Stefan Burkey is the hospitality practice leader for HUB International Florida. In this role, he oversees insurance placement solutions for owners, developers, and operators from limited-service hotels to full-scale resorts. Stefan and his team clearly understand the financial needs and exposures associated with the hospitality industry, and their singular focus has generated profound market knowledge and significant buying power for HUB clients throughout Florida and the U.S. Stefan won Risk & Insurance's 2023 Hospitality Power Broker of the Year.

Placito Miceli is a Senior Risk Consultant for the HUB Gulf South Region in HUB's Risk Services Division. He has over 15 years in claims, safety, training, and risk management. At HUB International, Placito provides a unique perspective in risk management to assist our clients in developing and implementing a holistic program. As the National Hospitality Risk Lead, he helps align the organization's strategic direction relative to current and emerging risks specific to the hospitality industry. Additionally, he provides expert guidance across the HUB footprint for maritime exposures (longshore and inland marine) and is a member of HUB's Catastrophic Modeling Team, assisting clients with catastrophic modeling, exposure analysis, and mitigation guidance.



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5th Street Group announces Church and Union coming to Florida in late 2024

South Carolina based 5th Street Group expands Southern portfolio to South Florida

Miami, FL—Church and Union (CU), the chef-driven restaurant concept by the Charleston, South Carolina-based 5th Street Group is making its way to sunny South Florida. Slated to open late-2024, the opening of Church & Union Miami Beach on the historic Collins Avenue will make for the fifth Church and Union location, preceded by outposts in Charleston, Nashville and Charlotte, as well as Denver opening later this year. It will also signal the continued expansion of the popular CU concept for 5th Street Group CEO Patrick Whalen, partner Alejandro Torio and chef partners Jamie Lynch and Adam Hodgson, who also own and operate Tempest in Charleston, La Belle Helene in Charlotte and Ophelia's Pizza + Bar in Nashville.




The highly anticipated restaurant will serve its signature menu of New American, internationally-inspired offerings in a casual yet polished dining atmosphere. Guests can expect an unmatched dining experience with a classy yet comfortable ambiance and top tier service not to mention creatively conceived and masterly mixed cocktails.

Designed by talented architects Shulman and Associates and Build McKenzie, the spacious, three-story 10,000-square-foot restaurant will feature ample seating for 200 guests including the bar and lounge area and a private dining room, perfect for

personal or professional soirees. The atmosphere and interior design remains uniform across all CU locations with signature design elements including an expansive white concrete bar and a hand-painted ceiling by Charlotte artist Jon Norris, which showcases all 11,450 words of Sun Tzu's The Art of War. Additional art includes a 10-by-six-foot Rootism abstract piece created by Justin Rivenbark, a 25-foot steel tree by a local Miami artist, and the signature "Charleston \$5 bill" painting, created by artists Matt Hooker and Rodney Raines, featuring a to-be-named icon as its centerpiece.

"Collins Avenue, the Art Deco District, and South Beach as a whole represent an iconic piece of American culture. It's an area saturated by history, cutting edge design and topflight hospitality. It would be an understatement to say that we at the 5th Street Group are excited to have the opportunity to bring Church and Union to Miami Beach; hopefully having a part in leading the next of wave of compelling, inspiring hospitality in SOBE," says Patrick Whalen.

Chef/partners Jamie Lynch and Adam Hodgson boast an impressive, combined culinary background. Lynch enjoyed previous positions at Le Cirque, Aureole and Café Boulud in New York City. He was recognized as Charlotte Magazine's "Best Chef" five times and competed on seasons 14 and 17 of "Top Chef/Top Chef All Stars." Hodgson is vice president of culinary operations for the group, having started with the company more than 10 years ago as line cook, then quickly working his way up to executive chef. With more than 20 years in the industry, he is also making a name for himself nationally with a season 23 appearance on Food Network's "Beat Bobby Flay."

The restaurant will be located at 745 Collins Avenue in Miami Beach. 


Chef/partners Jamie Lynch and Adam Hodgson boast an impressive, combined culinary background.

What's Going On from page 10

for its 5-stage water filters. The new lid will reduce the plastic used by its water filters by 20%—thereby saving 357,000 pounds of plastic per year. With 1.2 million single-use plastic bottles being used each day globally and 91% of those never being recycled, ZeroWater's redesigned peel-off-style lid and sustainability initiatives are the next step toward reducing post-consumer plastic waste in the U.S. and beyond. Visit zerowater.com for all details.

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Today's Restaurant News acknowledging that restaurant

owners have gone through tough times, is offering OWNERS the opportunity to recover funds paid to W2 Employees, during the past two years of COVID. The ERTC Program, if you qualify can help you keep your doors open. **Have you applied for your ERTC Refund yet? If not, we WILL help you,** go to <https://trnusa.com/apply-for-your-erc-recovery-funds-now>.

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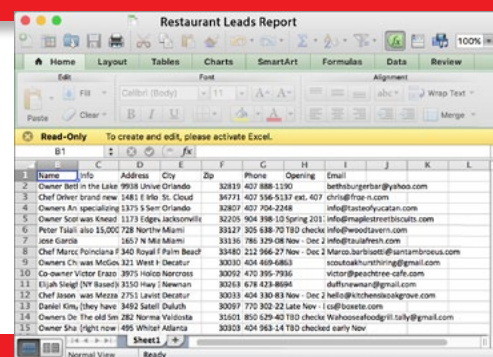
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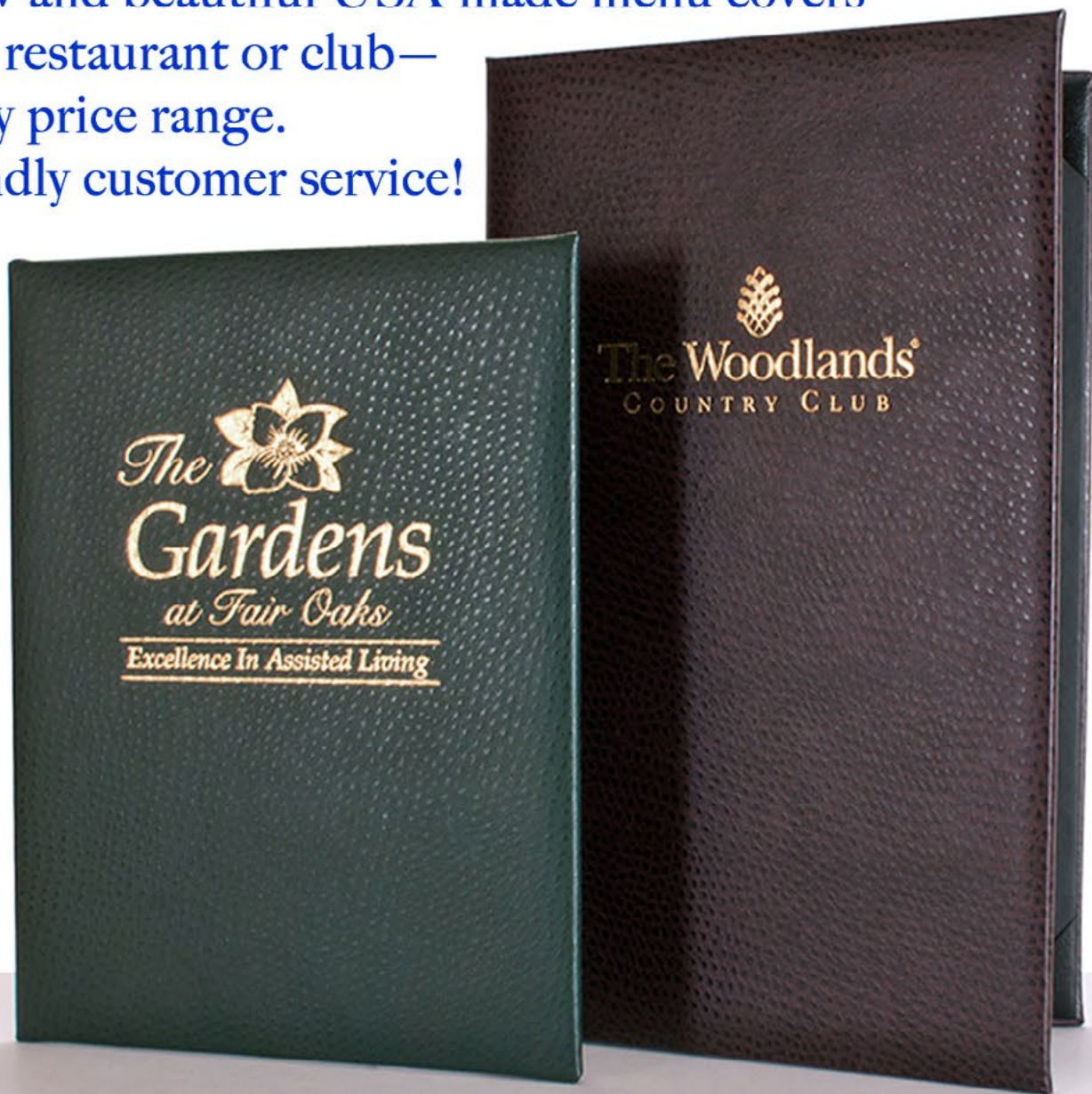
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MOLEY Robotics releases Chef's Kitchen

First in a revolutionary range of commercial robotic kitchen platforms

London England -Moble Robotics, the pioneering robotics company reveals its game changing new model, the Chef's Kitchen at the World Travel Catering & Onboard Services Expo, Hamburg, the first model in a ground-breaking line up of robotic commercial kitchens that will revolutionize how food is cooked.

As world leaders in in-flight catering, DNATA, make a strong partner with which to launch the Chef's Kitchen to a global audience attending the Expo.

45% of hospitality operators in the UK and 87% of hotels surveyed in the USA have been forced to cut capacity or opening hours due to staff shortages. Nowhere is this felt more acutely than in the kitchens. Moley Robotics' range of commercial kitchens are designed to collaborative and see the robot operating alongside human chefs. Not only will they reduce demands on antisocial hours, they standardize processes and procedures, serving up perfect dishes, every time. The first model of Moley Robotics' kitchens has passed CE marking certification in Europe, guaranteeing they're safe to operate in food preparation environments.

In an environment where margins are tight, Moley Robotics' commercial kitchen will provide a wealth of data to optimize food preparation, minimize wastage and drive a Return on Investment. By precisely controlling



the timing, sequence of operations and temperature curves we stabilize the quality of the dish across multiple locations by using the cloud based recipe library.

As showcased in the Chef's Kitchen robotic platform, Moley Robotics' technology is a modular and scalable architecture. Designed to integrate into the busiest of commercial kitchens and operate 24/7 with an ever-growing cloud database of recipes to suit the

interchangeable cooking modules that enable; frying, steaming, blending, stirring, boiling and mixing.

Like all the robotic kitchen's in Moley's range of commercial kitchen platforms, the Chef's Kitchen has been programmed to cook hundreds of recipes, including fresh omelettes, juicy steaks and delicious pasta dishes. The compact Chef's Kitchen includes a state-of-the-art industrial grade robotic arm complete with a dexterous robotic hand and everything you'd expect to find at a hotel or restaurant chefs' station: induction hob, utensils, including blender, tongs, as well as spatula and spoons. Ingredients and condiments are positioned in storage boxes within the reach of the robotic arm, ready to be cooked fresh.

Moley Robotics founder and CEO, Mark Oleynik said; "We are thrilled to partner with DNATA to reveal the Chef's Kitchen, our compact cooking robot designed to fit into residential homes or commercial hotel kitchens, where it can cook hundreds of professional chef grade dishes 24/7. In the coming weeks we'll be opening our London showroom so prospective customers can come and see the robot in action and sample its cooking.

"The Chef's Kitchen is the simplest version of our modular commercial kitchen range that will transform how freshly cooked meals are prepared in

individual portions based on the best chefs' recipes and eliminate the need for chefs to work antisocial night shifts.

"We have seen strong demand from elderly care homes and other social enterprises, where high quality fresh food faithfully recreated from chefs' original recipes is key to a high quality of life and generates strong social values for all generations.

"Some dishes lose their quality in minutes after they are cooked, they need to be eaten immediately. For example, pasta, steaks, omelettes, paella, and risotto. People demand and deserve freshly prepared food, rather than compromise on restaurant delivery services or ready meals from supermarkets. As the robot kitchen can operate 24/7, you're not limited as you are to delivery hours or couriers.

"The integration of the robot kitchen with delivery services would give an unlimited number of recipes to build tailored dietary programs and cuisine preferences and access to fresh cooked meals, 24/7.

The Moley Robotics commercial kitchen platform is the product of ten years research and development by an international team of 100 engineers, product and luxury interior designers and three award-winning chefs.

The Moley Robotics Chef's Kitchen works by replicating human skills in motion. Tim Anderson, culinary innovator and winner of the prestigious BBC Master Chef competition (2011) played an integral role in the kitchen's development, with his cooking techniques 3-D recorded then translated into elegant digital movement using bespoke algorithms.

Tim and fellow chefs Nicole Pisani and Andrew Clarke created dozens of dishes to showcase the robot's capabilities at launch, with new recipes added to the robot's repertoire every month.

About Moley Robotics: Moley Robotics was founded in 2014 by London-based computer scientist, robotics and healthcare innovator Mark Oleynik. The company is headquartered in the UK and has a showroom in London.

When the first prototype robotic kitchen was revealed 2015, it generated a huge amount of interest in the hotel, restaurant and catering industries. A commercial version of the Moley kitchen will be released in 2021 to meet this demand, Moley's engineers are currently developing integrated robots specifically for busy kitchens. Focus is on reliability and precision accuracy whilst serving up multiple portions of freshly cooked cuisine.

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CCCA from page 1

businesses and consumers an estimated \$9 billion a year over the last decade.

♦ The bill also strengthens national security by blocking networks that are "owned, operated, or sponsored by a foreign state entity," like China Union Pay, from entering the U.S. credit card market.

Learn more about the Credit Card Competition Act and its impact on restaurant operator costs here. Or, listen to our latest Order Up podcast for a discussion about what restaurant operators should know the bill.

About the National Restaurant Association: Founded in 1919, the National Restaurant Association is the leading business association for the restaurant industry, which comprises nearly 1 million restaurant and food-service outlets and a workforce of 15 million employees. Together with 52 State Associations, we are a network of professional organizations dedicated to serving every restaurant through advocacy, education, and food safety. We sponsor the industry's largest trade show (National Restaurant Association Show); leading food safety training and certification program (ServSafe); and unique career-building high school program (the NRAEF's ProStart). For more information, visit Restaurant.org and find @WeRRestaurants on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

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Cision announces Code of Ethics for Artificial Intelligence development

Supports the responsible application across the industry

Chicago, IL - Cision, an end-to-end consumer and media intelligence and communications platform, announced the introduction of a new Code of Ethics and a comprehensive Risk Management Framework created specifically to guide the company's development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) driven capabilities. This industry-leading action reflects increasing concerns from clients, governments, the public and regulators about the potential dangers of AI.

"The transformative power of AI has already impacted many aspects of communications, enabling us to better understand our audiences, craft more effective messaging and automate time-consuming tasks," said Antony Cousins, Executive Director of AI Strategy at Cision. "However, we must acknowledge that along with these benefits come potential risks to accuracy, privacy, fairness, transparency and equality."

The recent breakthroughs in generative AI and the accelerated pace of development across the PR, communications and marketing disciplines has created the need for a principled approach to the application of AI to ensure any guidelines aren't quickly

outdated. Cision's principles include commitments to:

- ◆ Rigorous testing, validation, and ongoing monitoring to minimize potential harm
- ◆ Privacy protection and security of client information
- ◆ Transparent documentation and explanation of AI objectives, potential risks and mitigations
- ◆ Commitment to maintaining human oversight while targeting and eliminating bias where possible

Cision is inviting any relevant stakeholders to reach out directly if they want to collaborate on industry-wide commitments.

Cision has been at the forefront of AI development for years, leveraging advanced technologies to deliver actionable analysis and powerful insights to its clients, and is the first in

the PR & communications sector to take a public stand on the responsible application of AI.

"We understand that as the largest communications technology company in the world, we must ensure that our AI solutions not only serve the needs of all our clients, but also avoid any unfair discrimination, violation of personal privacy or amplification of misinformation. The implementation of a robust risk management framework will ensure that Cision's AI technologies adhere to ethical standards and best practices, fostering a more equitable and responsible AI ecosystem," said Cousins.

Cision is also actively shaping the development of government guidelines ensuring representation for the communications industry in future AI regulations by actively engaging with the UK Government on its recently published whitepaper on AI regulation and the U.S. Government's request for contributions to their AI regulation plans. In addition, as a leader in industry associations like CIPR and AMEC, Cousins will be working to build broader industry commitment to responsible development guidelines.

"If we do not proactively act responsibly, forthcoming regulation will

be overly restrictive and limit our ability to maximize the positive impact AI can have for our customers. We want to collaborate with the whole industry to avoid this risk and ensure good outcomes for our clients and their stakeholders," said Cousins. Cision is inviting any relevant stakeholders to reach out directly if they want to collaborate on industry-wide commitments.

Cision has a robust pipeline of AI-driven capabilities leveraging the largest data set in the industry for training AI models, which it will continue to bring to market through its Brandwatch consumer intelligence solution, PR Newswire and CisionOne, the new revolutionary PR & communications platform, that debuts in July in the UK. 

About Cision: Cision – www.cision.com - is a comprehensive consumer and media intelligence and communications platform enabling public relations, marketing and communications professionals around the world to understand, influence and amplify their stories. As the market leader, Cision enables the next generation of leaders to strategically operate in the modern media landscape where company success is directly impacted by public opinion. Cision has offices in 24 countries through the Americas, EMEA and APAC, and offers a suite of best-in-class solutions, including PR Newswire, Brandwatch, Cision Communications Cloud® and Cision Insights.

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