

MASTER THE BASICS TO KEEP REVENUE STEADY DURING SOFT ECONOMY



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As uncertain economic times still challenge the nation, restaurants continue to feel the pinch as many people view eating out as a luxury. So what should restaurants do to draw people back on a more regular basis? Keep it simple, and follow the basics. Here are five things to keep in mind.

1.Strategize marketing efforts – Some operators consider marketing the first thing to be cut from a tight budget. But marketing is one of the most powerful yet simple business tools, *especially* in a down economy. If a full-scale marketing program is not affordable, use low-cost marketing strategies such as up-selling, social media promotion or loyalty programs.

2.Customer service – Every customer counts and one bad experience could mean the loss of not only returning customers but also others that may have been reached through positive word-of-mouth and social media. Train staff with the idea that no customer leaves unhappy.

3.Innovate – Restaurants operate in a highly competitive market, so setting your business apart from the competition is crucial. Why should people want to eat at your establishment? Be the place people think of for special occasions, whether it is game day or date night. Offer new menu items to entice repeat customers with variety and offer incentives for new customers to return, such as a rewards program or a free appetizer on their next visit.

4.Proper hygiene – No customer wants to eat or drink at an establishment that doesn't look clean and sanitary. Simple efforts remind customers of your commitment to maintaining a healthy environment. Make sure restrooms are tidy, tables and chairs are clean and all staff members are washing their hands before handling food. These efforts go a long way.

5.Be flexible – Not only are people cutting back on dining out, but recent crop shortages have driven up the price of food. Be sure to have a flexible business plan so you can alter your menu accordingly. This may mean getting creative about where you can cut costs without diminishing the quality of your service.

At [Tork](#), we understand the challenges of the food industry and work to help operators to improve hygiene, image and cost-in-use. We also understand that providing customers with a positive experience often times goes well beyond what is offered on the menu. Visit [our blog](#) for more tips on successful business practices.