

Once the lights are on, the menu is decided and the Chefs are cooking in the kitchen, the number one objective of a restaurant is to fill the seats and keep them filled!

**How do I get new customers?**

While it is equally important to retain existing customers, restaurant operators must face the fact that they will lose loyal customers due to circumstances beyond their control. Attracting new customers is an important component of a successful long-term marketing plan.

### **New Resident Program**

Marketing to new residents is an inexpensive and highly successful way of attracting new business to your restaurant, since new people are constantly moving in and out of your market. There are several companies that specialize in targeting these new residents, but we have partnered with the best.

Moving Targets is a Sysco iCare partner who reports an unprecedented 87% success rate. They do EVERYTHING for you, including design, copywriting, printing and mailing for the low cost of \$1.39 per mailing... and that even includes postage!

### **Business to Business Blitz**

A Business-to-Business Blitz is a great way to build every aspect of your business. It is nothing more than good old-fashioned, face-to-face networking with other businesses in the 3 to 5 mile radius around your restaurant. Here are some suggestions on how to implement a successful B2B Blitz campaign:

- B2B Blitzes need not be complicated... just a handshake, a sincere introduction and personal invitation to come visit your restaurant. Try them in the morning on a weekly basis.
- Break the ice with a nice platter of hot biscuits, donuts, danish or cinnamon rolls. The sweet aroma will permeate throughout the office, creating interest among the employees.
- Be sure to have plenty of take-out menus and catering menus to give them.
- You may want to add an offer to entice them. One idea is to give small "gift certificates" to show good faith and build public relations.
- This is also a great opportunity to promote business lunches, dinners and catering.

### **Congratulations Opportunities**

Every week in the local paper, there is a "Celebration" section and usually a section dedicated to high profile local business promotions. For example, when John Doe's promotion or XYZ Company's Grand Opening is featured in the local paper, this presents a unique opportunity for your restaurant to offer your congratulations and send them a gift certificate to help them celebrate... and no one celebrates alone. This is also a great opportunity to build good public relations and word of mouth advertising.

### **Community Marketing**

Independent restaurant operators have a great marketing advantage over the chains. You are part of the community. You live there and work there... so why not use that to help you market your restaurant. Below are a few ideas:

#### **Schools**

Fundraisers or Reward Programs (Perfect Attendance or Honor Roll).

#### **Sports Leagues**

Sponsor a local team, video local school games and re-play them on the TVs in your restaurant; offer VIP awards and certificates to a team.

#### **Charity Tuesdays**

Never say no to donation requests again. Instead, offer to do a benefit dinner for them on a slow night. 10% of the proceeds are donated to their charity. They help bring new faces to your restaurant, it keeps slow nights busy and it provides good public relations for you.

#### **Retirement Communities**

This is a great segment to fill the 5:00 – 6:00 pm dinner hour of your restaurant.

#### **Civic Leagues & Local Organizations**

Offer your restaurant's banquet rooms or private dining rooms for meeting space on days/times when you're closed or not booked.