

## Best Practices

### *The Key To Success With Online Ordering*

The launch of a new Online Ordering service is like the launch of a new restaurant. It is a business venture that can generate new revenue streams. But just as the success of a new restaurant depends on the number of customers who visit, the success of your new Online Ordering service also will depend on the volume of traffic you can drive to your website.

Deploying a new Online Ordering initiative will not improve your bottom line unless you also invest in a good marketing campaign to publicize it and incent customers to try it.

### *Enlist The Help Of Marketing Professionals*

To ensure a good return on your advertising budget it is important to seek advice from marketing professionals. A professional will help you identify the best vehicles for getting the word out and can also generate the creative concept behind – and the graphic design of – your marketing campaign.

If you have a working relationship with an ad agency or other marketing consultant you should contact them immediately and tell them that promoting Online Ordering is your number one priority. If you do not currently work with an ad agency now may be the time to start. One way to find a qualified provider is to share this document with them and discuss the experience they have with each of the various promotions described below.

- *If your restaurant does not have the budget to work with a local advertising agency and you plan to launch a marketing campaign on your own, ASI/Restaurant Manager offers both the “Marketing Starter Kit” and a six month “Marketing Service” to help you in this effort.*

### *Decide On A Special Incentive*

It is important to provide a clear incentive for customers to place an order online. Many restaurants offer a discount on online orders. Some offer a gift certificate that can be used at a later date, after the online order has been processed. Others offer giveaways as varied as free movie tickets or free T-shirts.

The incentive you offer must appeal to the type of customer you wish to attract. A free order of fries might work well for pizza delivery businesses while an elegantly designed gift certificate works better for a fine dining restaurant. Before settling on the incentive, you must compare what it will cost you against the new business you expect it to generate. The type of incentive most likely to attract customers in your local market is the first issue you must discuss with a marketing professional.

- *ASI/Restaurant Manager offers advice on incentives to all restaurants that sign-up for our six month “Marketing Service”.*



## Identify The Best Advertising Media For Your Campaign

Depending on your budget, there are a variety of media you can use to advertise your new Online Ordering service. Direct mail and email campaigns are a must...but require additional investment in building and maintaining mailing lists. Online advertising can also be very effective, especially when the ad or listing includes a link to your Online Ordering page. Other media you might want to consider include print ads in newspapers, magazines and dining guides, as well as TV and radio. But the most obvious and cost effective place to advertise Online Ordering is right in your restaurant.

- *ASI/Restaurant Manager offers periodic consultations on the all advertising vehicles described below to restaurants that sign-up for our six month "Marketing Service".*

### In-House Advertising

As soon as you start to think about your restaurant as advertising space, you will be able to look around and find all sorts of places to advertise: on carry out packaging, on menus, on sales receipts and guest checks, on table tents or posters, on paper napkins and in your "on hold" phone message. Of course, it is important that you create in-house advertising that aligns with the overall concept behind your business. A fine dining restaurant that uses Online Ordering to sell an elegant Thanksgiving dinner will use a very different look and feel to promote Online Ordering than a delivery business that sells pizzas online. Here are several ideas on in-house advertising.

#### Phone System

Your business should be equipped with a phone system or service that allows you to record an "on hold" message that promotes your online ordering promotion.

- *Restaurants that sign-up with ASI/Restaurant Manager for our six month "Marketing Service" receive assistance in recording an "on hold" message.*

#### Phone Scripts

When employees take orders over the phone they should start the call by reading a short script describing the discount or incentive the customer will receive if they place their next order online.

- *ASI/Restaurant Manager offers a "Marketing Starter Kit" that includes laminated phone scripts restaurants can post near phones where orders are taken.*

#### Menus & Packaging

The next time you re-print your menus or re-order carry-out packaging be sure they are re-designed to incorporate your website URL address and an Online Ordering incentive. You may also want to get promotional messages printed on additional paper supplies such as napkins or placemats.

- *The ASI/Restaurant Manager "Marketing Starter Kit" includes the following pre-printed materials:*
  - *Box toppers that can be affixed to bags and boxes*
  - *Printed flyers for insertion inside bags and boxes*
  - *A promotional message printed at the base of all Restaurant Manager sales receipts.*

#### Marketing Collateral

Restaurants should consider creating additional advertising collateral such as table tents, posters for display in the restaurants and at other local businesses, sandwich boards for display in and around the restaurant, and promotional flyers for manual distribution.

- *The ASI/Restaurant Manager "Marketing Starter Kit" includes the following pre-printed collateral:*
  - *Laminated table tents in acrylic holders*
  - *Printed flyers for distribution in nearby neighborhoods*
  - *Fishbowl cutouts for collecting business cards*
  - *Email Club cards for customers who wish to opt in to receive broadcast email.*



## Mail Campaigns

As mentioned above, direct mail and email campaigns are particularly effective ways to promote a new Online Ordering service. But both require additional effort in building mailing lists and assistance from a graphic designer who can create effective pieces.

### Mailing Lists

There are many list brokers as well as local clubs and associations willing to sell or swap standard mailing lists for direct mail campaigns, but email lists usually have to be generated on your own.

The most obvious list to build is one that includes customers who already frequent your restaurant. There are many ways to incent customers to provide personal data and "opt in" to a mailing list. But remember, getting customers to opt in to your list requires a different incentive than the promotion that rewards them for placing an online order.

For instance, restaurants that offer a 10% discount on all online orders might use a different promotion such as a drawing for a "Free Dinner for Two" or a "Free iPod" that helps incent customers to opt-in to mailing lists. A fish-bowl, club cards and an online email club can all be used to promote the drawing. Club Cards are particularly effective when staff earn points for getting customers to fill them out.

- *Restaurants that purchase the ASI/Restaurant Manager "Marketing Starter Kit" receive pre-printed club cards and laminated fishbowl cutouts.*
- *Restaurants who sign up the ASI/Restaurant Manager six month "Marketing Service" receive advice on list brokers and other low cost sources for standard mailing lists. They also receive a FREE Email Club software application that can be used to build email lists and send broadcast email.*

### Mailers

Once you have built a list of current and prospective customers you must enlist a graphic designer to create post-cards, flyers or an HTML email that promote Online Ordering. If you have a good mailing list you may also consider getting additional designs on other promotions you offer such as free meals on your birthday, early bird specials or student discounts.

- *ASI/Restaurant Manager designs a custom HTML email campaign for restaurants who sign up for the six month "Marketing Service" and manages one email broadcast per month to all the addresses generated via the Email Club utility. For an additional fee ASI/Restaurant Manager will also design postcards for use in direct mail campaigns.*

## Internet Advertising

Internet advertising is a particularly effective media for advertising Online Ordering, especially when the ad or listing includes a direct link to your Online Ordering page.

### Your Own Home Page

There should be a link to your Online Ordering service right on the home page of your own website.

- *Restaurants who sign up for the ASI/Restaurant Manager six month "Marketing Service" receive assistance in updating their home page with a link to the Online Ordering service as well as a special Email Club utility that incentes customers to opt-in for receipt of broadcast emails.*

### Online Dining Guides & Other Entertainment Websites

Sign up with as many local online guides as you can and where ever possible ensure your listing includes mention of your Online Ordering service. You may even wish to create a special landing page for prospective customers who link to your site from an online service.

### Social Networking Sites

Facebook, MySpace and other social networking sites provide excellent media for low cost advertising and links back to your home page.



### **Search Engine**

Contact your webmaster and ensure your restaurant and website are listed with the most popular web search engines (Google, Yahoo, MSN, etc.) to help drive traffic to the site. You should also work with your webmaster to implement leading practices for SEO (Search Engine Optimization) to maximize your exposure and traffic.

### **Partner With Schools & Local Charities**

Reach out to local schools and charities with an offer to donate a percentage of any Online Order that is placed by a customer they send to your Online Ordering service. Perhaps they will agree to put a link to your site right on their homepage. Perhaps they will use another media to communicate the promotion. But, either way, they can help generate traffic for Online Ordering.

### **Traditional Paid Advertising**

If your budget includes money for advertising in newspapers and magazines or on radio or TV, be sure to update your ads to include your website and details about your online promotion.





## Summary Checklist

- Contact ad agency or marketing consultant

### In-House Advertising

- Record "on hold" message
- Post phone script near phones
- Re-print menus
- Update carry-out packaging
- Print message on napkins, placemats, etc.
- Add promotional message to RM sales receipts
- Print inserts or box-toppers
- Print and laminate table tents
- Print and hang posters
- Create and display sandwich boards
- Print Club Cards...train staff on use
- Print and laminate fishbowl cutouts
- Purchase and display fishbowl
- Print flyers for delivery to local neighborhoods

### Internet Advertising

- Register website with search engines
- Consult web master on optimizing web presence
- Update homepage with link to Online Ordering page
- Add an Email Club to website
- Design HTML email
- Purchase listings on local dining and entertainment guides
- Create presence on social networking sites

### Traditional Media

- Update print ads placed in:
  - Dining and entertainment guides
  - Newspapers and other publications
  - Billboards
- Update radio and TV ads to promote Online Ordering

### Mailings

- Purchase/acquire standard mailing lists for local community
- Design and print postcards for direct mail campaign
- Contract with local provider to process direct mail campaigns on regular basis

### Staff Training

- Train staff to use phone script
- Train staff to earn points with Club Cards
- Train staff to add/delete customers on mailing lists
- Train managers to send broadcast HTML email

