



Your Guide to Building a

Restaurant Marketing Plan





Introduction

Every restaurant owner, operator, and manager is the epitome of a jack of all trades.

You are equal parts manager, culinary connoisseur, business analyst, events host, hospitality maven, logistical mastermind, savvy negotiator, salesperson, marketer, and more.

In other words, running a successful restaurant is so much more than delivering dazzling dishes and service with a smile.

Your guests have thousands of restaurant options to choose from approximately 660,000 to be precise – to choose from when deciding what and where they want to eat. You need to find a way to attract new guests and retain existing ones, turning everyone who visits your restaurant into a lifelong fan, friend, and brand advocate.

And this is increasingly true in 2021 and beyond.

The expectations of your guests have changed. COVID-19 has forced restaurants to quickly pivot into new, convenient dining options. Your restaurant is facing more and more pressure to adapt – and compete against the restaurants that already have.

Ultimately, what will set you apart is how you market your restaurant, communicate with guests, and provide the best overall dining experience. The good news is that the channels of communication haven't changed during the COVID-19 pandemic. But you do have to tweak your messaging to make sure it's most relevant to your customer base, even as things change daily.

Let's start with your marketing. Marketing is the sequence of actions your business takes to entice and engage with customers, with the ultimate goal of winning their repeat business and long-term loyalty.

Marketing is an invaluable tool. One that, when used correctly, has the power to turn your business into a 100 year brand. That being said, you cannot market your restaurant once and call yourself a pro.

The key to marketing is **consistency** and **goal setting**. As any personal trainer will tell you, the most effective way to reach your goals is by establishing a well-thought out plan that helps you achieve success incrementally.

Enter: **Your Restaurant Marketing Plan.**



This plan should highlight:

- **What** marketing activities you have planned for your restaurant in the year ahead
- **Why** you are doing them
- **When** they will take place
- **How long** they will last
- **How much** they will cost you





Some marketing initiatives – like social media campaigns – will require daily attention from you and your team. Others will require intermittent testing periods to be effective.



In this guide we'll cover:

- Different marketing channels your restaurant should be exploring
- How to conduct a marketing campaign
- How to test different marketing strategies
- What resources you can use in your planning
- How to forecast your marketing budget

In this guide, we've also included a sample restaurant marketing plan and calendar – the Excel spreadsheet attached in the folder you downloaded – that you can start using today to as a blueprint for your marketing plans in 2021.

Let's **get started!**

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How to Set Up Your Calendar	Social Media	Email Marketing	Google & Search Engine Ads	Community & Sponsorships	Video	Print Ads & Direct Mail

1

How to Set Up Your Calendar

Toast's Restaurant Marketing Plan and templates can (and should) be used to plan out your restaurant's marketing initiatives for the year ahead, project spend, and record actual performance metrics as your marketing campaigns go live.

If you want to use this plan to retroactively compare actual spend to projected spend, we suggest downloading our [Restaurant Budget Variance Template](#) as well.

Category	January	February	March	April	May	June
Social Media						
Budget	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
Notes	Normal Ad Spend	Normal Ad Spend	Quarterly Test - Facebook	Normal Ad Spend	Normal Ad Spend	Quarterly Test
Search Engine Ads						
Budget					\$300.00	\$100.00
Notes					Summer Adwords Test	Cont. Test
Email Marketing						
Budget	\$200.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$100.00
Notes	Super Bowl Email and Newsletter	Newsletter	Newsletter	Reengagement Email and Newsletter	Summer Menu and Newsletter	Newsletter
Sponsorship & Events						
Budget			\$500.00			\$100.00
Notes			Local SR			Drum Br
Direct Mail						
Budget		\$50.00		\$200.00		
Notes		University Menu Drop-Off		Semi-Annual Menu Mailer		
Video						
Budget					\$500.00	\$100.00
Notes						
Other						
Budget						
Notes						
Monthly Total	\$300.00					

Category	January	February	March	April	May	June
Newsletter						
Budget			\$2,000.00			\$100.00
Notes			Football Team Sponsorship			Holiday
Direct Mail						
Budget		\$50.00			\$200.00	
Notes		University Menu Drop-Off			Semi-Annual Menu Mailer	



In the 2021 Marketing Plan Sheet document, you will find the following tabs:

- Yearly Budget
- Yearly Budget Example
- Example Month
- A tab for each month of the year in 2021

The 'yearly budget example' and 'example month' tabs are filled out to help you as you determine the marketing plan specific to your restaurant.

In the 'yearly budget' tab, you will see we break down spend by month and marketing channel; each marketing channel is given its own color, providing you with an easy-to-read, color-coded restaurant marketing plan.



The seven channels we include are:

- Social Media
- Search Engine Ads
- Email Marketing
- Sponsorship & Events
- Direct Mail
- Video
- Other

In your restaurant's marketing plan, make sure to include a row for every marketing channel you use, like radio ads or promotion sites like Groupon; that's why we created an 'other' tab for you.

Simply indicate your spend for each channel within each month's column. If you are not using that channel for a given month, leave it blank.

At the bottom of each month column, you will see we have a place where 'monthly total spend' is automatically tabulated based on the numbers you input in the cells above.

Category	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September
Social Media									
Budget									
Notes									
Search Engine Ads									
Budget									
Notes									
Email Marketing									
Budget									
Notes									
Sponsorship & Events									
Budget									
Notes									
Direct Mail									
Budget									
Notes									
Video									
Budget									
Notes									
Other									
Budget									
Notes									

The month tabs allow you to break down your marketing initiatives and corresponding spend by day. In the 'example month' tab, you will see a basic monthly calendar broken out by day. Within each day, there are four rows.

It's very likely you will be conducting multiple marketing campaigns across multiple marketing channels at any given time.

Simply click on one of the four rows within a day and type the name of the marketing initiative or campaign that takes place on that day as well as how much you have budgeted to support it. Color code it so that it matches its corresponding row in the budget tab.



21 Sunday Brunch 🍷	22 Twitter Campaign Live Send Direct Mail Yelp Promoted Search	23 Local Cable Video Ads Send Direct Mail	24 50% Off Kids Menu 🍷 Send Direct Mail Reengagement Email	25	26 Local Festival Sponsor	27 Local Festival Sponsor Local Cable Video Ads
28 Sunday Brunch 🍷 Local Festival Sponsor Mail Offer Redeemable	29 Mail Offer Redeemable	30 Local Cable Video Ads Mail Offer Redeemable Anniversary Email	31 50% Off Kids Menu 🍷 Mail Offer Redeemable	1 Customer Appreciation Mail Offer Redeemable	2 Adjust Twitter Campaign Adjust Yelp Promotion Mail Offer Redeemable	3 Local Cable Video Ads Mail Offer Redeemable

Now that you understand how to use the calendar templates, let's dive into the 5 most popular restaurant marketing channels and how to use them to your advantage.



2

Social Media

Did you know **79% of Americans** have a social media profile? That 79% includes **every living generation**, socio-cultural demographic, and level of education under the sun.

Point blank: Everyone is on social media, and your restaurant needs to be to. Here are some fast facts about social media usage:

- Facebook has over 2.8 billion monthly active users. That's billion. With a B. [\(source\)](#).
- Instagram has over 1 billion monthly active users [\(source\)](#).
- Twitter has over 330 million monthly active users [\(source\)](#).
- Tiktok is expected to reach over 1.2 billion monthly active users in 2021 [\(source\)](#).

And, while it's important to cultivate a social media presence across the channels where your target customers hang out, content isn't the only thing that can be trending: social media sites themselves rise and fall in popularity.

Toast's [2019 Restaurant Success Report](#) found that,

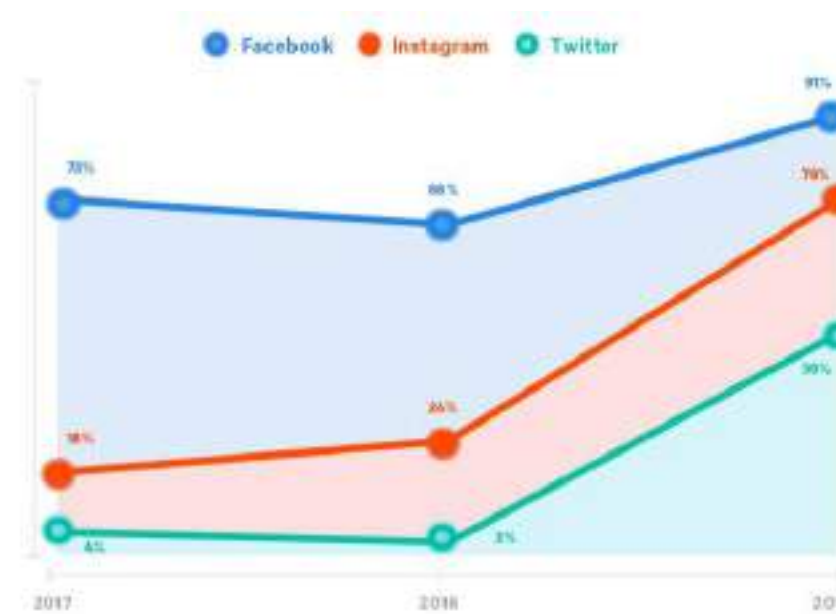
// Instagram is showing a huge growth trajectory in popularity with restaurateurs. In 2017, only 18% of restaurateurs used Instagram to promote their businesses, and in 2018, it grew to 24%. In 2019, that number has skyrocketed to 78%.

While Facebook may still reign supreme as the social media marketing channel of choice for restaurant owners and operators, Instagram's popularity is on the rise while Twitter's is on the decline.

In 2018, 68% of restaurant professionals used Facebook as part of their marketing strategy and 24% used Instagram. In 2019, those numbers have skyrocketed. 91% of restaurant professionals use Facebook as part of their marketing strategy and 78% use Instagram.

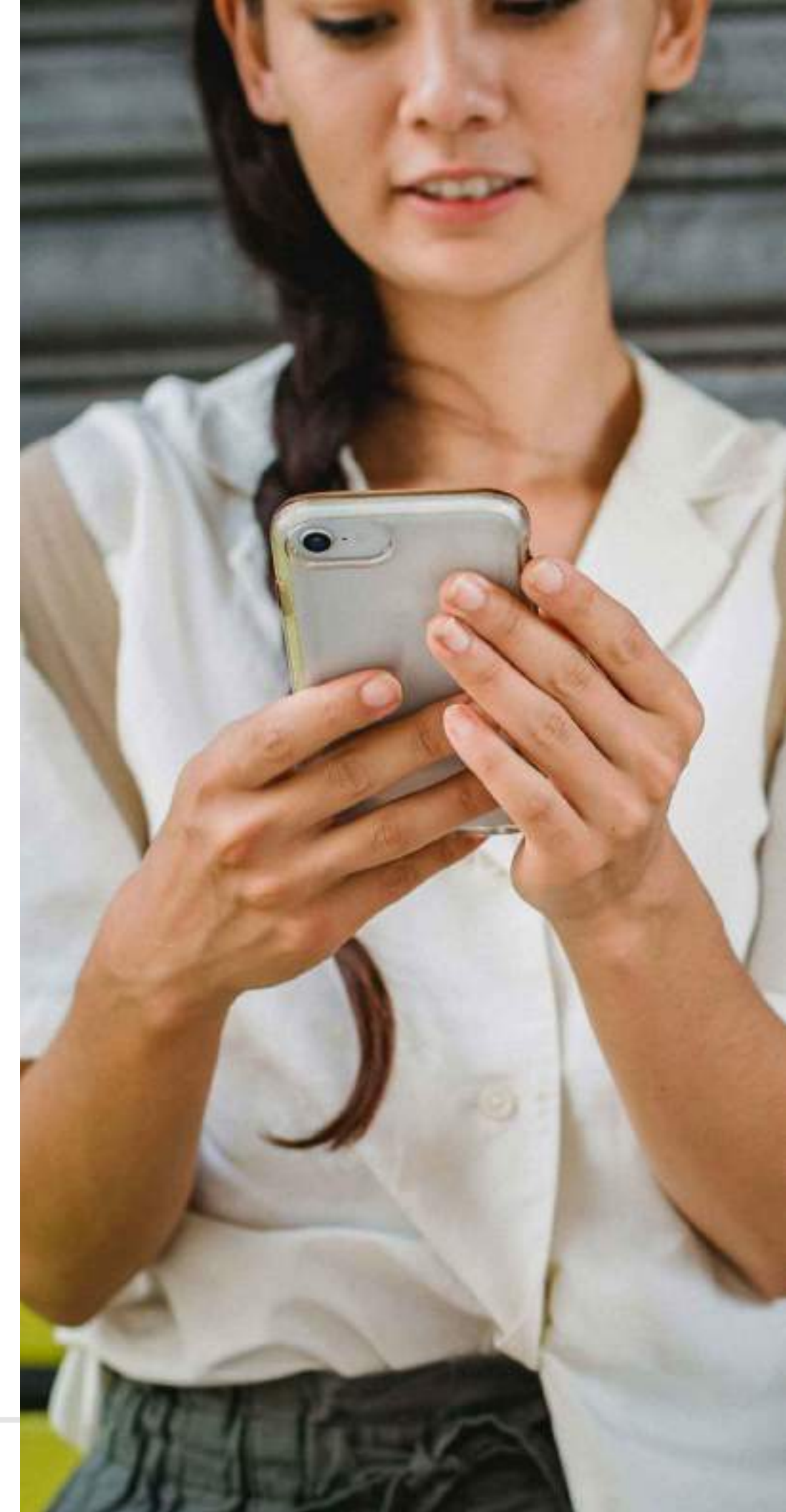
As with restaurants, Facebook is still the primary social media platform for the majority of Americans – according to [The Pew Research Center](#), 68% of adult Americans are self-identified Facebook users – yet Instagram's increase in popularity since 2016 is telling, especially its dominance with the 18-24 year old age bracket.

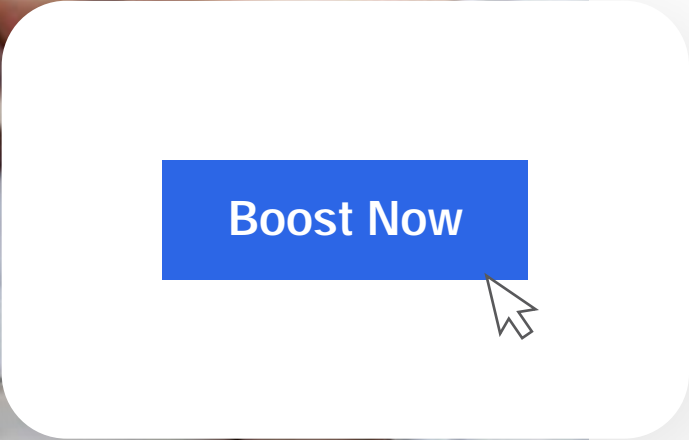
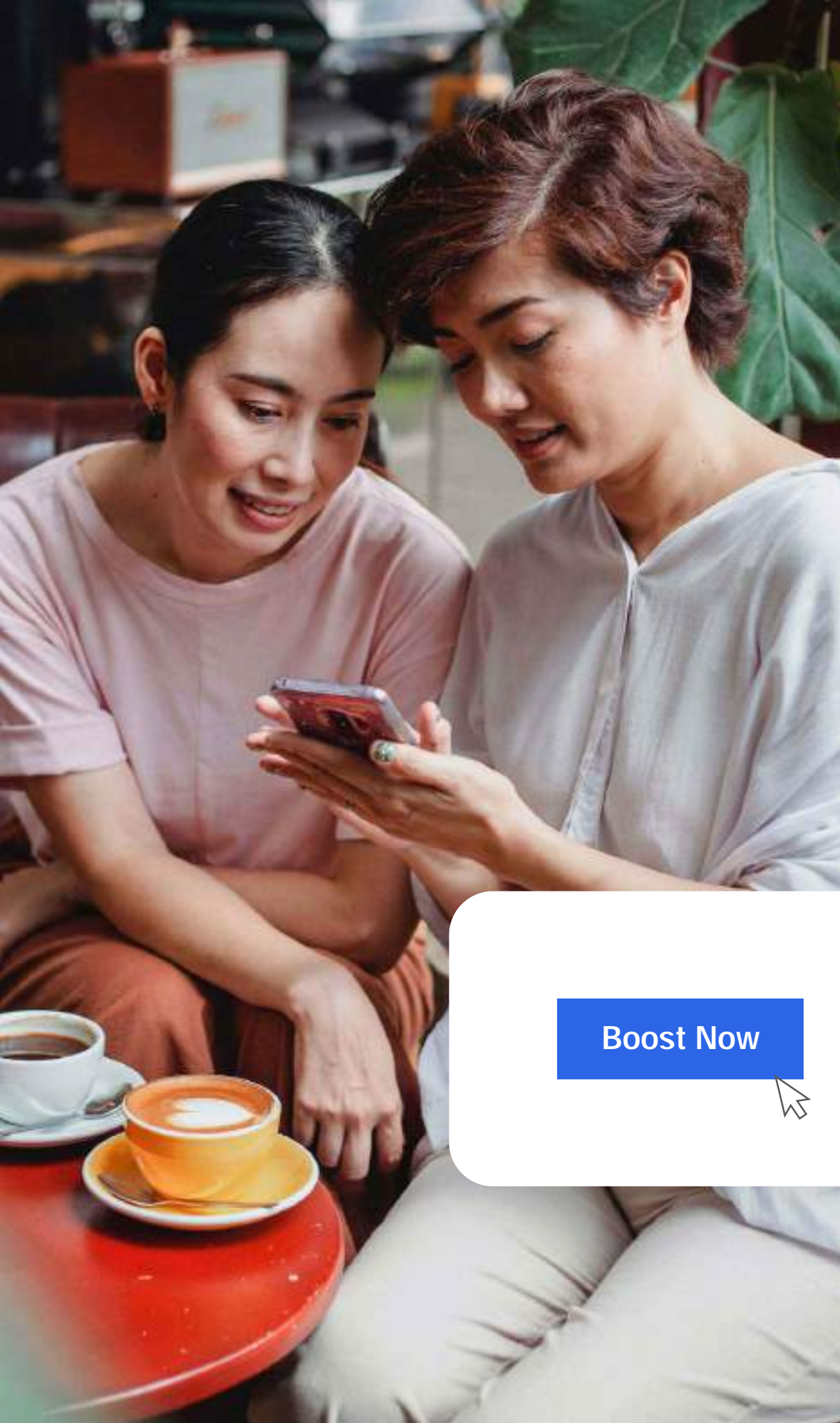
When focusing on social media marketing, it's important to meet your **target customers** where they spend the most time. If you've found the majority of your customer base is comprised of millennials and Gen Z, you'll want to invest some time and energy into your Instagram strategy; if your customers are mostly parents with teenagers, Facebook is where you should be.



Additionally, you should familiarize yourself with all the different marketing options you have on the various platforms. Instagram and Facebook, for example, have live streaming features as well as stories that can be revisited for 24 hours after you post them, in addition to posts that are accessible at any time.

Testing out the different types of posts can help you engage with a larger audience and make for better brand awareness.





How To Market Your Restaurant on Social Media

Social media marketing is broken down by two categories: **organic** – or free – **posting and paid posting** also called advertising or ‘boosting’ as it is known on Facebook and Instagram. Organic posting may sound simple — just type a message, upload a photo, and/or post a video on your restaurant page and voila! — but it still requires thoughtful planning and execution.

To see what makes great organic content and how often to post, check out our [Restaurant Social Media Guide](#).

For paid advertising on social media, you have a few options. On **Facebook**, for example, you can turn anything you post on your restaurant’s Facebook page into paid advertising. After you publish a post on your Facebook page, you will see a small blue “boost” button in the bottom right hand corner; clicking on this button will bring you to a page where you can decide how much money you’d like to use to promote this content, who you would like to see this content, and how many days you’d like your budget to be spread over.

Check out [this article](#) to learn more about how to use Facebook ads for restaurants.

Since Instagram and Facebook are part of the same network, you have the option to also run advertisements on Instagram as well. If you choose to do so, make sure that you are optimizing the imagery for maximum quality!

On Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, you can also create an ad in that website's ad manager – all of which are listed as resources on the next page. If you're brand new to social media advertising, take the first few days or weeks to test out new ideas. Ask yourself questions like: Do images or videos work better with my audience? If I increase the amount I spend on an ad, does it increase the amount of times it's clicked?

These sites' ads managers let you run several ads at once and monitor their performance over time. Select a budget and an angle for each ad and see which one works best for your business! You may find that boosted and paid posts don't produce enough engagement to justify the spend, in which case you should focus your efforts on outstanding organic posts.

The Cost of Social Media Ads

Social media marketing can be completely free or it can cost you thousands – it's completely dependent on your audience size, your social media platform, and your budget. That's why it's important to test so your team can get a feel for how far your dollars will go on each site. Additionally, what works for you might differ from what works for other restaurants.

Nick Kiouftis, the Director of Operations at [California Grill](#), has had a much higher success rate running his own social media compared to hiring a company to run it.

"I hired a variety of marketing companies and wasn't really seeing the performance I was looking for. I took it over about 6 months ago and have started growing content, engagement, and profile visits by 1000%. I think originally we were seeing maybe 100 profile visits a week but by becoming extremely active, we have seen that number grow."

With over 11,000 Instagram followers and 6,000 likes on Facebook, Nick uses their social media to promote specials, show online ordering how-to videos, host giveaways, and keep up with internet trends

Whether you're using paid or organic tactics to engage with your customers, knowing their habits and remaining diligent with your strategy is how you'll see the most benefit.



Liked by [whittierchamber](#) and others

[cagrillwhittier](#) Start your morning sunny side up at California Grill and save 20% for a limited time... more



Toast Resources



The Guide to Social Media
for Restaurants



Examples of Awesome Restaurant
Social Media Marketing



How to Use Facebook Ads
for Restaurants



5 Ways to Take Your Restaurant
Instagram Posts to the Next Level





3

Email Marketing

Implementing an email marketing strategy can go a long way, but subtlety and tact are really important here. There's a fine line between sending an email that truly benefits the customer, and bombarding their inbox with unwanted noise.

But here's the good news: 68% of guests said they love receiving emails regarding specials and discounts, according to our 2020 Guide to the Restaurant Guest, so this is the primary form of email marketing you should prioritize.

How Do I Get My Customer's Email?

Email marketing is a great way to reach a diverse audience, and an easy way to outreach to a ton of guests at the same time — once you have their email, of course.

There are lots of different ways to go about collecting customer information to send email updates. You can offer a sign up page on your website, have your servers drop physical email sign up forms at tables after a guest has finished their meal, or you can enlist your **point of sale system** to capture guest information upon check out.

Your POS can also track the dining habits of your guests, which can lead to more personalized messaging. Say, for example, you have a diner who

frequently eats at your restaurant on Wednesdays around 11:30am, and generally orders a burger and fries. You could use this data to personalize an email by suggesting they enjoy that burger at a discount, with a subject line like "Getting hungry? We can help" sent around 10:45am.

This not only encourages email open rates, but also adds to guest experience and satisfaction when receiving communications from your restaurant. Here are some other ways to use email marketing to engage customers.

Types of Email Marketing

A huge plus of email marketing is that your audience has previously dined with you or is interested in doing so, so you've already got their attention in some form.

For this reason, you want to be extra careful not to lose their business, so be thoughtful when executing your emails. It's good practice to use catchy titles, keep all messaging short and sweet, and highlight the most important items so the value of the email is quickly recognized.

Here are the different email marketing options you can use to communicate to your guests.

Newsletters

Sending out monthly or even weekly newsletters helps advertise all the cool stuff you've got going on at your restaurant.

Whether you are updating your guests on new menu items like **Governor's Restaurant & Bakery**, highlighting upcoming events, or making big announcements, a newsletter is a wonderful way to do it.



Order Online

Introducing our Summer Special Features!

The Gov is cooking up some great limited time summer features! Stop in to your local Governor's Restaurant today and give them a taste!



Bahn Mi Sandwich

The Gov's take on a traditional Vietnamese sandwich - a split ciabatta baguette filled with pulled pork simmered in a spicy barbecue sauce and topped with savory pickled vegetables. Served with fresh fried kettle chips. \$11



Strawberry Walnut Salad

Our favorite summer salad - Fresh spinach and romaine lettuce tossed with walnuts, feta cheese and fresh strawberry slices.

Entree sized salad \$8.49. Add Chicken \$4

As a side salad with your meal - Add \$2 to your entree



Mimosas

Start your morning with fresh orange juice mixed with sparkling champagne. \$6



Spicy Breakfast Scramble

Your choice of potato cubes, grilled breakfast potato, or later tots topped with scrambled eggs, melted cheese, and spicy tomato glaze. Served with a slice of toast. \$8.50

Celebratory Coupons

Collecting customer information also gives you the ability to share coupons on important dates. If it's your guest's one-year anniversary of the first time they dined at your restaurant, you've got a reason to congratulate them — and what better way to do so than with a free entrée?

This goes for birthdays and romantic anniversaries as well. Showing your customers that you care about their personal milestones lets them know they matter to you and encourages return visits.

Promotional Emails

If you're offering \$3 off margaritas on a hot summer day or a limited-time discount on appetizers, a promotional email is an effective way to get the word out. It's also a great way to boost sales on slow days — sending an email blast advertising the next 30 dine-in customers receive a buy-one-get-one deal will get people running to your restaurant.

Protein Bar & Kitchen used a promotional email advertising a free bowl to get customers to download their app. This tactic helped Protein Bar grow their loyalty members, as everyone that uses their app is automatically added to their loyalty program.



End your summer strong with a FREE Sweet Pea Falafel Bowl*

This warm weather favorite is packed with seasonal vegetables, house-made hummus, tzatziki and 29g of protein. But just like summer, the Sweet Pea Falafel won't be around for long. Place your order using the PBK Rewards app by 9/22 to snag your bowl!

*No modifications or substitutions. Order must be placed using the PBK Rewards app to receive offer.



We miss you!

It's been a while since we last saw you.
Come back and check out our latest grub!

Show this email to us and get a **special offer** on your next visit.

Check out our menu

One free rice crispie treat

With purchase of any menu steamwich!

Chicago Bagel Authority
953 WEST ARMITAGE AVENUE
CHICAGO
IL
60614
UNITED STATES

[Unsubscribe](#)

Powered by Toast

Chicago Bagel Authority
does a great job of
re-igniting customer love.

Loyalty Rewards Updates

If someone is just about to get a free meal through your loyalty rewards program, invite them to come back ASAP to achieve their goal. Loyalty programs increase a customer's lifetime value by **30% or more** through increased visit frequency and spend per visit, so reminding your diners when they are close to a reward benefits everyone.

"We Miss You" Emails

Sending out an email to a customer expressing that you miss seeing them in your restaurant is also a great tactic that uses data captured through your POS. If your data is showing one of your former frequent diners hasn't been in to eat in a while, send them an email, possibly with a promotion, that tells them you're thinking of them.

Cost of Email Marketing

Email marketing is relatively inexpensive, and the return on investment is pretty great. According to **a study published by WebFX**, for every one dollar spent on email marketing, a restaurant generates forty-four dollars. With that rate of success, email marketing is a cost effective way to reach your audience and promote your restaurant on any budget.



Toast Resources



Chicago Bagel Authority Drives
300 Repeat Visits Using Automated
Email Campaigns



How to Build a Successful
Restaurant Newsletter



Restaurant Digital Marketing Ideas:
From Beginner to Expert



Marketing to Millennials Made
Simple: The Restaurant Edition



5.6 Billion
searches per day

4

Google & Search Engine Ads

Who's using Google? Everyone. Google sees **5.6 billion searches per day**. Filling out your restaurant's Google My Business page and paying for search engine ads on Google, Yahoo, and even Bing helps your restaurant appear first when people search keywords like "restaurants near me."

How-To Market Your Restaurant Using Google & Search Engine Ads

There are three ways to increase the chances that a Google searcher will find your restaurant first.

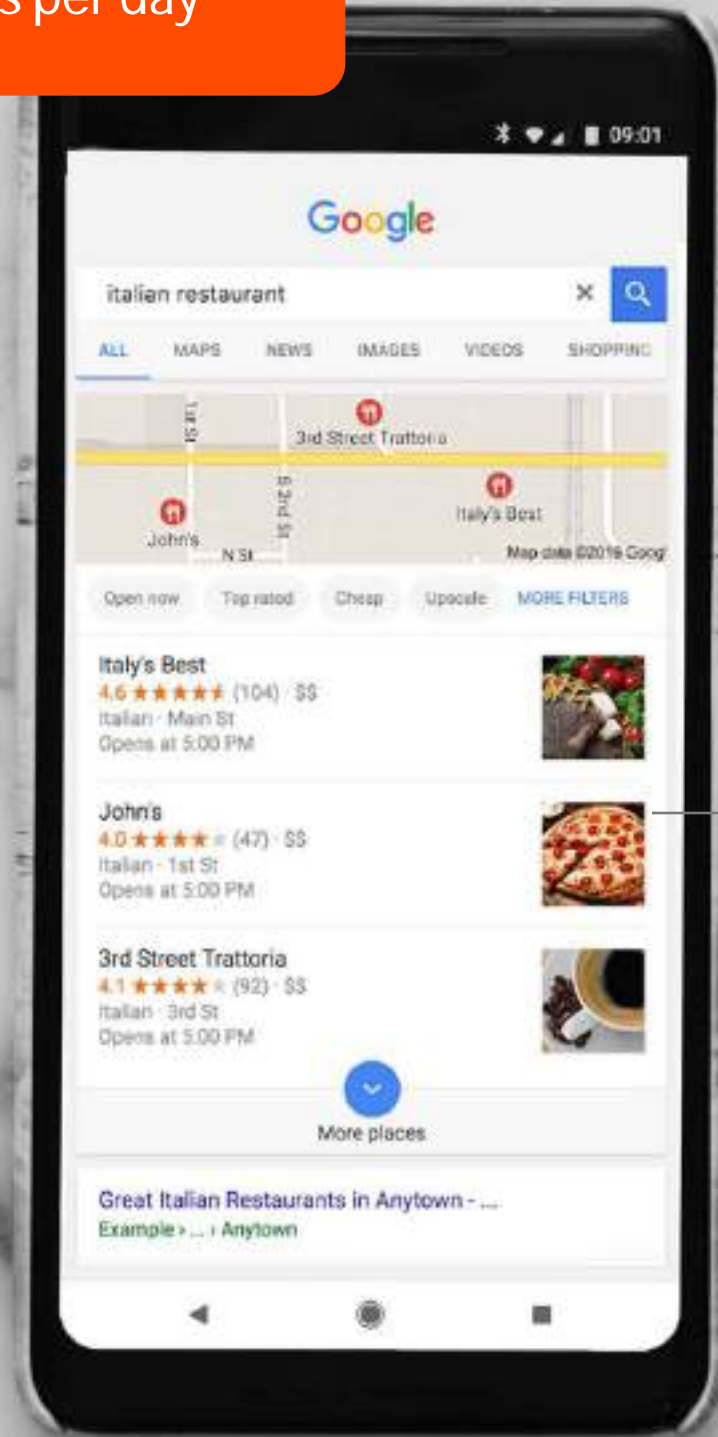
- 1 Maximize the relevance of your Google My Business page by filling out the proper information and keeping your page up to date. For more information, [see here](#).
- 2 Optimize your website for certain keywords by including them in the meta-title, meta-description, and headers of your pages. Want to show up for searches like "Italian restaurant in Salem, NH?" Simply including those keywords on the page could help you rank higher.

Authentic Italian Restaurant in Salem, NH | Tuscan Kitchen

www.tuscanbrands.com/Kitchen/Salem/

Tuscan Kitchen offers great authentic Italian food & pasta cooked in artisan ways as well as wine & fine dining in Derry, Manchester, Pelham, Nashua.

[Our Menus](#) · [Italian Food News & Events in ...](#) · [Reservation](#) · [Private Dining](#)



3

Set aside a small budget to test the effectiveness of Google Adwords.



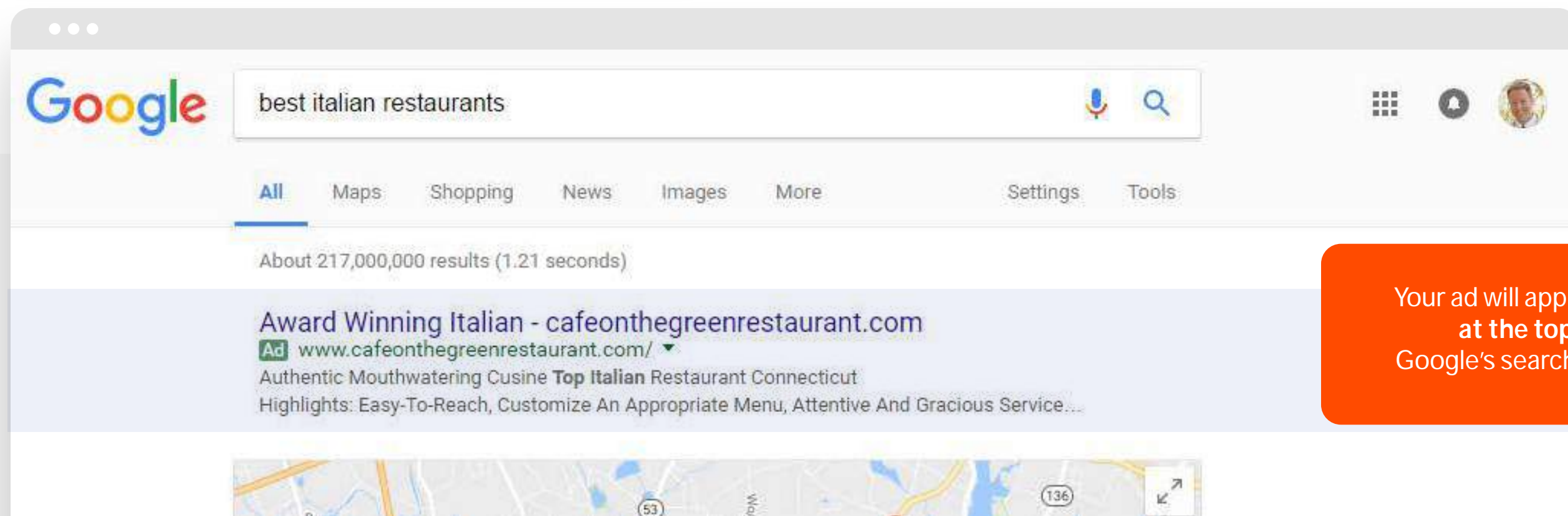
You should consider testing with Google Adwords if...

- You want to drive traffic to an online ordering site
- You want to see which keywords people are searching for to reach your site
- You have multiple locations
- You think Google AdWords could be an effective strategy for your restaurant

Test these ads with different messages and promotions to see which is effective!

The Cost of Search Engine Ads

Google's ad costs depend on the keyword you're bidding on. Some keywords, like **restaurants near me**, could cost hundreds of dollars per click because of the many people searching. However, other keywords, like **"Italian restaurants in Salem, NH"** could cost pennies, due to the hypertargeted audience you're reaching. Google will allow you to set the budget for your ads, so you don't end up spending too much.



Your ad will appear here,
at the top of
Google's search results.



Toast Resources



Restaurant Website Checklist



How Restaurants Should Use Google My Business and Local Search



Your Beginner's Guide to Technical Restaurant SEO



Restaurant Website Management: Everything You Need To Know





5

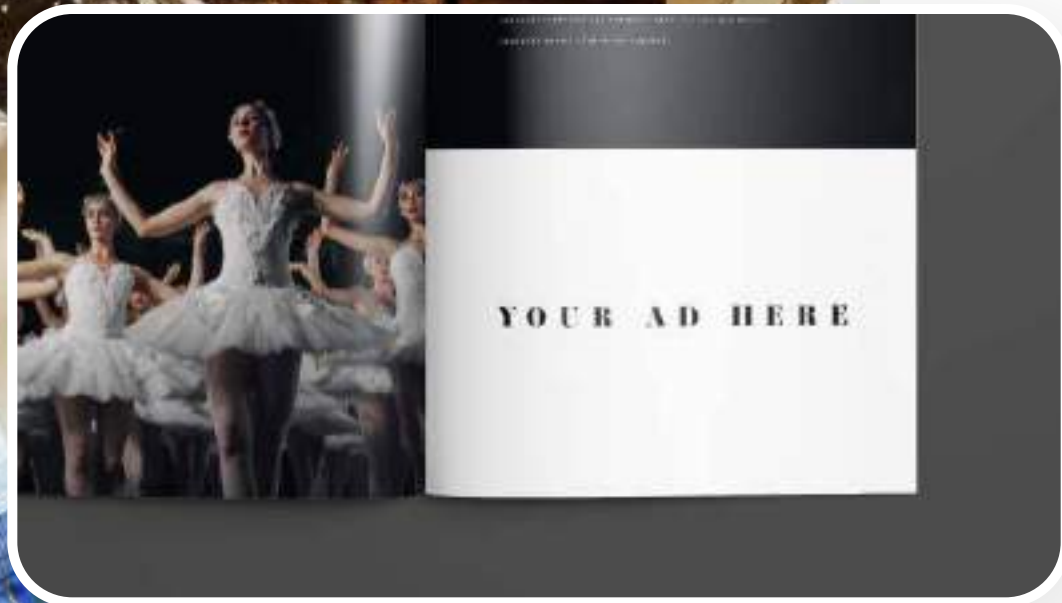
Community Event Sponsorship & Charitable Giving

Charity and event sponsorships are the second **most popular form** of restaurant advertising behind social media ads, with 53% of restaurant professionals mentioning community events as a promotion method they used in 2019.

While in-person events might not be happening at the moment, there are still many ways your restaurant can market your business and create stronger relationships with your community.

How To Market Your Restaurant Using Community Event Sponsorship & Charitable Giving

When choosing what community event or charity to sponsor, you'll have to consider if it aligns with your brand and if the cause in question resonates with your audience. Sponsorship for events is a great way to generate new customers and gets your brand more exposure within your community. Charitable or cause-related events, in particular, are great to support because your restaurant can give back, align your brand with a positive message, and tap into the press coverage many charity events receive.



Things to keep in mind: as you seek out opportunities for event sponsorship, ask the organizers for the average number of attendees (both current goals and previous attendance numbers), as well as demographics for the event. It's important to think about where your ads are placed, and how well they fit the audience it's targeted towards.

For example, if your restaurant is a kid-friendly place, you may consider ad placements in your town's upcoming middle school musical production, whereas if your restaurant is a fine-dining establishment, you may want to consider getting a spot in your school district's Graduation bill come springtime.

In some instances, restaurants can opt to team up with other businesses in their area to work towards a charitable cause together. Consider looking for events that support menu collaborations, food fests, or even a **"battle of the chefs"** theme where proceeds benefit a local charity!

Finding opportunities for sponsorship can be easy and incredibly profitable.

Eddie Nero, the founder of Big Ed's BBQ, is committed to serving his local community and giving back when he can.

One aspect of this is Big Ed's no-cost annual Thanksgiving meal, a collaborative effort with meat suppliers made possible year by year through financial donations from the community. Big Ed's is committed to this tradition, and to giving back to the community that has given so much of itself.

By collaborating with other local suppliers and helping out the community, Big Ed's is aligning itself with an important social cause, while strengthening community relationships.

Finding sponsorship opportunities can be easy and a great way to get more involved in your local community.



66% of millennials
are willing to pay more
to support brands "committed
to a positive social and
environmental impact."

6

Video

Video impacts everyone – just in different ways. **Traditional television** viewing remains consistently high for those aged 50 and above, while **YouTube reaches more** 18-49 year olds than any other U.S. cable network.

Cable television is still the best platform for your video ads for restaurants skewing towards an older demographic.



These include:

- High-end steakhouses
- Elegant bars
- Fine-dining restaurants
- Restaurants in areas with a high average age



Restaurants aiming at the younger crowd should look into YouTube ads, Instagram videos (through both Instagram Live and Reels), and TikTok.

A good way to test this platform out is to place a video on your YouTube, Facebook, or Instagram page for free to see what the response is with your existing customer base. If you don't want to make a traditional advertisement, alluring shots of food prep can make for noteworthy video content.

TikTok is one of the fastest-growing social media platforms of all time – and is a great place to test out new content and engage with a younger audience. Plus, there's easy video editing software directly integrated into the app.

For the restaurant owner that wants to try their hand at video creation, there are a variety of inexpensive tools available. Now that iPhones and other smartphones have the ability to shoot in 4K, the stage is ripe for restaurants to produce high quality restaurant video marketing and promotional content.

Apps like Filmic Pro and MAVIS, which turn your smartphone into a high-quality video-making powerhouse, and we all know how easy it is to connect with current and potential guests through **restaurant social media marketing**.

While **Filmic Pro** and **Mavis** are both paid apps, they offer something that your regular iPhone or android video app can't offer: the ability to record and export high-quality video with total control of the image.

Used in conjunction with inexpensive hardware peripherals like a Melamount Stabilizer (which costs less than \$40), any restaurateur can produce high-quality video without having to buy or rent expensive camera equipment.

If the process of shooting and editing video is not your forte, hire a freelancer for a small fee or reach out to a local college or school to see if a student would be willing to take on the work as a class project.

The Cost of Video Advertising

The upfront cost for video production can be anywhere from free (using an iPhone) to a few hundred dollars to thousands of dollars. When working with a freelancer or production company, ensure both parties are transparent about budget and cost expectations.

The cost of YouTube ads ranges between 10 and 30 cents **per view**. As for **TV ads**, local ads range from a couple hundred dollars to \$1,500. Overall, TV ad prices are **on the rise**, further cementing the need for a high potential ROI if you take this route.

With the rise in popularity of TikTok and Instagram, however, there is no need to spend a large sum of money as your restaurant starts to explore video. These apps are free and provide huge potential to reach thousands of new customers – so try them out, and don't worry too much about expensive cameras or perfect scripts.

Viewers want to see authenticity, yummy food, and personality above all, so have fun with it!



Toast Resources



Restaurant Video Marketing:
5 Ideas to Get You Started



How to Create Your Restaurant
Marketing Budget



Restaurant Promotion Ideas You'll
Wish You Had Thought of Earlier



Creative Ideas for Your
Restaurant Ads





7

Printed Materials & Direct Mail

Think direct mail is dead? Think again. Direct mail is so irreplaceable in American culture that not even email can fully overtake it.

Nearly **half of Americans** look forward to checking their mail every day. The **response rate to household direct mail ads** is 6% – compare that to the 0.9% (or less) response rate for digital ads and direct mail doesn't seem six feet under anymore, does it? To calculate your direct mail ROI, check out this free [calculator](#).

On average, direct mail recipients purchase 28% more items and spend 28% more money than those who do not get that same piece of mail. What's even better: a \$167 direct mail budget can lead to \$2,095 in sales, according to Forbes.

How To Use Direct Mail And Print Ads To Market Your Restaurant

If you mail out your menus to houses and offices or drop them off in college dorm rooms, you're more likely to get a response from those efforts than from a purchased email list.

Add a regular menu send to your marketing plan. Send out menus once or twice a year, whenever you change your menu or whenever you're offering new coupons or promotions. Near a college campus? Find out when the semester starts and drop menus all over dorm halls and academic buildings.

According to **USPS**, 67% of people feel direct mail is more personal than the internet.

Adding leave-behind cards in your takeout and delivery orders is another easy way to market your restaurant's off-premise presence. Offering a 10% discount or a special appetizer with their next order is a great way to remind guests to keep coming back. And, if you're trying to get guests off of third-party delivery apps, it's also a great way to encourage them to order directly from you next time.

In a world of digital messaging, there's something special about tangible marketing material delivered to your door – and the numbers back that up.

Because there's no "one size fits all" to direct mail costs, use the following formula to determine the cost to you.

Note that Design Fee and Mailing List Acquisition Fee may be one-time costs.



The cost of Direct Mail

$$\begin{aligned} & ((\text{Price per Menu}) \times (\text{Number of Menus Sent}) \times \\ & (\text{Mailing Cost per Menu})) + \text{Design Fee} + \\ & \text{Mailing List Acquisition Fee} = \text{Direct Mail Cost} \end{aligned}$$




Toast Resources



How to Make a Restaurant Menu From Scratch in 10 Steps



How to Turn Your Menu Into a Marketing Tool



Restaurant Menu Design Guide: 8 Essential Tips, Tricks, and Examples



Create an Online Ordering Menu with Food That Travels Well





Coming up with a restaurant marketing plan is challenging when you're not entirely sure who you're marketing to. How can you be expected to connect with your guests while also tackling all of the other responsibilities you have? Thankfully, Toast's all-in-one restaurant platform can help.

The Toast platform does much more than just transact and accept payment. One of the many things it does is collect and safely store customer information so you can stay in touch. The platform also tracks sales data so you can see who's buying what and when, and it lets guests sign up for your loyalty program when they order or via a digital receipt. These are just a few of the important insights you need to craft a winning restaurant marketing plan, and you can find them all in Toast's all-in-one restaurant platform.

Want to learn how Toast can help your restaurant?
[Click here to get a free demo](#) for your restaurant and to speak to a representative from our team.

[Request a Demo](#)