

BUILDING THE BOTTOM LINE & DEPENDABLE STAFF

APRIL MARKED THE FOURTH CONSECUTIVE MONTH OF PAYROLL GROWTH – REPRESENTING A NET INCREASE OF MORE THAN 645,000 JOBS, BUT RESTAURANT EMPLOYMENT LEVELS REMAIN BELOW PRE-PANDEMIC DAYS. WHAT’S NEXT FOR OPERATORS AS THEY TACKLE THIS PHASE OF COVID-19 RECOVERY?

The past year has proven what we’ve known all along: the foodservice industry is strong, creative, and resilient. It is also beloved by consumers and an important part of our culture. While we still find ourselves in a time of recovery and many diners are not currently eating out, half of consumers are ready to return to (or have already started) pre-pandemic spending habits, routines, and activities. Consumers are returning to dining rooms; 43% of those already vaccinated have eaten in a dining room over the past 2 weeks, and 44% of those who are not vaccinated have done the same. Now is the time to be bold and decisive as you restore your operation to pre-pandemic times and adjust to new consumer expectations. Here are three tips for optimizing your operation and bottom line.



1

VALUE-ADD SOLUTIONS

When labor is tight or too expensive, look for value-added solutions to decrease the load on everyone’s plate.



Take advantage of technologies that relieve employee duties such as online ordering systems, self-ordering devices, or employee scheduling software.



Choose ready-made products that eliminate back-of-house prep to save time and number of staffers needed. Less food prep knowledge required also widens the net for qualified staff to fill positions.



SPREAD THE
WORD!

If your value-added solutions directly affect customers, such as the ability to order online, encourage them through social media posts and distinct webpage design to use the technology so your employees can focus elsewhere.

TAKE CARE OF THE CREW

2



SPREAD the
WORD!

Let the world know you respect your crew! Post staff highlights on social media, share rave customer reviews of great work, or hang a Staff Member of the Month plaque.

The only thing more important than making new hires when you are low on staff is not losing the crew you already have. Emotional and financial support whenever possible creates a caring culture that lets them know they're valued.



Guests aren't the only ones concerned with safety. Listen to staff concerns and implement what you can to mitigate exposure and worry, such as providing PPE and reviewing/practicing recommended sanitary procedures.



Operators are getting creative with retention bonuses, wage raises, and other benefits. Money may be tight, but weigh the cost of losing a staff member.



Set goals together and get creative with rewards once achieved. Relationships and pride in their accomplishments will grow, which can help retention.

3

TAKE CONTROL

While several factors may be out of your hands, grab the reins on what you have the power to control such as SKU choices and menu mix to tend to the bottom line. Cutting costs in some areas may free up funds to reward employees in efforts to improve retention or entice new hires.



Focus on the margins. Drinks, desserts, soups, sides, and low-prep items often have high-margins.



Versatility and cross-utilizing ingredients simplifies inventory and can reduce costs and spoilage. Consider items that can span the menu from savory entrees and sides to unexpected desserts.



SPREAD the
WORD!

Promote high-margin items wherever possible, such as in social media posts or through suggestive selling within online ordering platforms.

Your creativity and resilience have gotten you this far. As you tackle this next step in recovery, work with partners who understand today's trends and challenges. With a deep repertoire of bases, gravies, toppings, soups, and sauces, Custom Culinary® can deliver authentic flavor while saving you time and labor. We're here to help you strategize—consumer insights, menu concepts, on-trend ingredients, and high-margin recipes. It's what we do.