



The 5 best ways to connect with diners

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As brand loyalty diminishes, foodservice expert Rob Corliss divulges the best ways to keep the customers coming back for more.



Hospitality -- how the guest feels -- is the key, says Chef Rob Corliss. Photo: Shutterstock

Consumer complexity is at an all-time high, says Chef Rob Corliss, who has more than two decades of experience in the foodservice industry. As the consumer mindset and behavior shifts – chefs need to embrace a flexible strategy to effectively connect and engage with culinary practices.

by Rob Corliss

Hospitality Driven

People are craving deeper relationships with their food and experiences today. We all tout the best food, beverages and service – but how your guest feels (aka hospitality) is just as important as what they are served — and this, is your differentiator. Back up your culinary chops with unsurpassed hospitality, fostering an experiential mindset. Hospitality is at the heart of a chef.



Create the full experience for your patrons, Chef Rob Corliss says.

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Indelible Memories

Memories create lasting connections and your strategy is to build long-term consumer engagement! People remember memories — not days or things, but memories. Culinary is a natural vehicle for crafting indelible memories. Leverage your menu equity and position your food and beverage attributes just as much as your brand. Build the story around your product offerings.

Flavor Crave

A vast majority of the time –76% — consumers select a dining venue, based on a craving, according to Datassential. Today's consumers are driven by “what” they want to eat vs. where they want to eat. This shift in eating habits and diminishing brand loyalty has created an opportunity to maximize the “craveability” quotient of your menu items. We all want to develop food that drives repeat business and generates a buzz. Flavor is a connection and driver of this craveability and is instrumental in building guest loyalty. Flavor conjures an emotional experience – showcase it via new forms, cuisines, techniques, ingredients and more.



Your menu speaks volumes. Photo: Shutterstock

Menu DNA

Don't forget the obvious: Your menu is your DNA – it is your identity. Your menu is THE ONE THING that all guests (current and potential) will see and review. Guests may not see an advertisement, or a promotion, or even be on social media, but 100% will interact with your menu. Crafting an enticing story via your menu will influence purchasing potential and repeat business.

Engaging Ownership

Connecting culinary with your guests, so they have ownership in your brand is critical, especially in today's world of social media driven "real time expression." Consumer generated content is the most trusted. Encourage the voice of your fans through experiential loyalty. Allow your guests to order from wherever they want. Encourage your fans to post food pics, as pictures travel faster than words. Understand and value how your guest feels by crafting multi-channel customer engagement platforms and earn their endorsement.



Chef Rob Corliss is a 3x James Beard House guest chef with over 20+ years of experience across multi-disciplines that include running world class resort hotels, launching new restaurant concepts, working in top foodservice marketing agencies and currently owning his own culinary consulting company ATE <http://www.7ate9.biz>. With an energizing passion for food ATE is focused on flavor innovation; with the daily goal of connecting people to their food, environment & wellness. For more information contact Chef Rob at: robcorliss@7ate9.biz.