

IF YOUR RESTAURANT IS OPEN – INNOVATE-CREATE-CONNECT

The best way to build sales is to build community and in challenging times this is one of most powerful tools we have available as business owners and leaders. There is an age-old adage that says the best way to help yourself is to help someone else. That is what hospitality is truly all about.

Here are ways to build sales through building community. The cornerstone of community is connectivity and in a social distance world, here are proven solutions to build both sales and community.

TEAM FOCUS

- **LOVE YOUR TEAM** members– recognize their commitment to you, your business and your community.
- Recognize they have family members and friends that they could be with and they are still coming to work at your business.
- Thank your team members with “family meals”, extra uniforms, employees eat for free, and provide them with a lunch or dinner they can take home to their families, thank them every day.

MENU FOCUS

- Modify, innovate and create menus that work for where your customers are now. It does not have to be your full menu, it can be specials, platters and menu packages.
Mike Anderson’s Gonzales – check out their Facebook Menu – <https://bit.ly/3a89d2e>
- Include modified menus with each curbside and delivery orders. Simple print outs so your customer has them readily available.
- Post your new menus on Social Media continuously.

SEVICE FOCUS

- Provide Services to Support Your Business and Your Customers.
 - Ocean’s 234 has created 234 Grocery - <https://www.oceans234.com/>
 - Chief ‘s Pub has created a CVS delivery program - <https://chiefspub.com/>
- Partner with great Pizza companies and ask them to please carry and deliver your product.
 - Suzy’s Swirl was fortunate to partner with Donati’s Pizza – www.suzysswirl.com
- Create Makeshift Drive – Thru – check out La Carreta – Denham Springs Facebook for an awesome video –Facebook La Carreta Denham Springs – <https://bit.ly/2UIPfKJ>
- Third Party Delivery - If you don’t offer Third-Party delivery options. Start offering delivery services you can start with a small menu and build as your customers find you on-line.
- Catering - If you are not currently offering catering, now is the time to look into EZ-Caterer. A turnkey solution for connecting with more customers in a new way.

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COMMUNITY FOCUS

- Gift Cards for Heroes – Donati’s Pizza Lake Bluff, IL – Ask your customers to buy gift cards to donate to first-responders, health care professionals, police and fire departments.
Check out this video – <https://bit.ly/33xz2Gg>
- Donations with Orders – Donati’s Pizza and Suzy’s Swirl, Lake Bluff, IL – for every Donati’s Pizza and Suzy’s Swirl Pint sold both restaurants will donate a dollar to the local food bank.
Check out this video – <https://bit.ly/2UIOFg1>
- Birthdays, Anniversaries, Graduations, and Other Life Events will be impacted during this time.
Add a handwritten note to your curbside and delivery-it is free and it will be priceless.
- Work with your local Chamber of Commerce – here is an excellent example of a Chamber going above and beyond for their community. <https://www.lflbchamber.com>

IF YOUR BUSINESS IS CLOSED DOWN – IT DOES NOT MEAN YOU ARE SHUT DOWN

Customer Connectivity in a Socially Distance World: Staying top of mind with your customers by being a positive force of good.

- 1) Leverage Loyalty Programs
 - a. Leverage Communication to Wish Customers Well – Offer nothing except a positive message
 - b. Do shout outs to people working in health, fire and police fields
 - c. Do shout outs to loyal customers just mentioning someone’s name or picture is a win
- 2) Promote Social Media Happy Hours – a time each day where you go live on Facebook or Instagram and invite your followers to join in on conversations like:
 - a. Favorite drinks, desserts, recipes
 - b. Fun ways they have found to keep busy while at home
 - c. Activities that keep kids busy
 - d. The list goes on and on
- 3) Utilize your Social Media as a way to communicate positive messages, shout outs, what you are doing in your restaurant.
- 4) Send out short videos letting your customers know you care by just saying hello.
- 5) Be a Cheerleader for local businesses that are open and helping others in your community.
We are all in it together and we need to support each other in our “new” normal.

LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION IS KEY

LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION:

Confidence: The team is a reflection of the leader – the more confident you are the more confident the team and your customers will be.

Consistent: Communicate with facts, direction, and gratitude.

Constant: Communicate hourly, daily, shift, etc. The key is to provide constant communication to keep people connected. It is also an excellent way to check in with your team too.

Channels: Use all the channels of communication, telephone, zoom, text, email, schedule tools.

Circle Back: Check back in with the team to insure they are hearing and getting your message. They have a lot going on to and sometimes things get lost in translation.

Your front-line team members are your best brand ambassadors the key is to keep them healthy, safe, informed, and inspired by your leadership.

About Kathleen Wood

Kathleen Wood, is the CEO and Founder of Kathleen Wood Partners, a growth strategy firm specifically focused on working with Founders, Entrepreneurs, Small Business Owners and Franchisees. Kathleen has been committed to small business success for over 20 years. She continues to be even more committed to small business success today as America is built on small businesses.

Kathleen is also the Co-Founder of Suzy's Swirl, a family-owned and operated frozen dessert retail company in Lake Bluff, IL. Previously, she was the President and COO of Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers, leading the company before, during, and the recovery from Hurricane Katrina. Personally, and professionally Kathleen knows the challenges of small businesses in trying times because she is leading her own businesses in real-time and working with her clients across the country as everyone bands together to navigate these unprecedented times.

Kathleen Wood Partners is here to help small businesses grow even in uncertain times!

Please keep safe, healthy, and moving forward – we are all in this together!