

Marketing guide and trends for restaurants **2025**



Mobile App



Online reviews



Customer data



Emotional connections



Loyalty program

U E A T

A MONERIS COMPANY ©



Summary

About this guide	3
-------------------------	----------

Components for a successful marketing strategy	4
---	----------

Customer data	5
----------------------	----------

Customer segmentation	7
-----------------------	---

Personalized messages	9
-----------------------	---

Evaluating marketing performance	10
----------------------------------	----

Optimized operations	11
----------------------	----

How to collect data	12
---------------------	----

Setting for long-term customer loyalty	13
---	-----------

Top 2025 marketing strategies for restaurants	15
--	-----------

Elevate your web presence	16
---------------------------	----

Never underestimate the power of online reviews	17
---	----

Up your email and newsletter game	18
-----------------------------------	----

Reconsider your online ordering platform	19
--	----

Get your very own mobile app	20
------------------------------	----

Rethink your on-site marketing	21
--------------------------------	----

Revamp your loyalty program	23
-----------------------------	----

Be creative with your delivery/takeout/curbside pick-up packaging	25
---	----

Trending marketing strategies for restaurants for 2025	27
---	-----------

Invest in hyper-local marketing	28
---------------------------------	----

Get ready for voice and AI search	29
-----------------------------------	----

Promote your sustainability practices	31
---------------------------------------	----

UEAT Online Ordering Demo	32
---------------------------	----



New market trends and consumer behaviour impacting your restaurant marketing.

Restaurant owners and managers face a whole range of new challenges in 2024 that show no signs of letting up for 2025. New market trends, driven by factors such as inflation, a widespread staffing shortage, and changing consumer preferences, are forcing restaurateurs to rethink their marketing strategies—both in 2024 and beyond.

This restaurant marketing guide gathers marketing ideas that restaurateurs can implement without breaking the bank.

That is why we have separated this guide into two. The first part will offer updated twists on classic marketing initiatives that are known to generate results when carried out effectively. The second part will present restaurant marketing ideas that are at the leading edge of innovation; they are meant to show restaurateurs what is emerging in the years to come so that they can better adapt in the future.

Classic marketing initiatives



Trending restaurant marketing ideas





But before we present our 2024/2025 marketing strategies to consider for your restaurant, you need to lay the foundation down to ensure their performance. In fact, there are **two critical components** to a restaurant's successful marketing strategy that you must always keep in mind:

Maintaining control of your customer data



Creating emotional connections with your customers





**Setting the table
for restaurant
marketing success:**

Customer data



If you want your restaurant to succeed, you need to understand your customers.

Restaurant customer data is the key to doing just that.

In today's competitive market, simply serving good food is no longer enough. You have to build relationships with your customers, anticipate their needs, and keep them coming back. The only way to do that effectively is by collecting and using restaurant customer data.

Use digital tools like CRM systems, POS data, and online ordering platforms to collect guest data. This information can help you understand your customer's preferences, dining habits, and frequency of visits. Use this data to tailor your marketing messages, menu offerings, and overall customer experience, thereby increasing customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Restaurants are behind many other industries when it comes to tapping into the tremendous potential of customer data to boost loyalty and profits, especially when they rely solely on third-party delivery apps (also known as marketplaces) that keep that information for their own benefit.

For any restaurant that wants to grow, its marketing strategy must be based on customer data. Data is the surefire way to elevate customer engagement through highly personalized experiences, promotions, offers, rewards programs and more.





Benefits of collecting customer data

Customer segmentation

By analyzing customer data, you can segment your customers according to their demographics, preferences, and behaviours. This will help you develop tailored menu offerings and marketing campaigns that resonate with your specific customer groups and drive them to your restaurant.

➔ Here are some examples of customer segmentation:

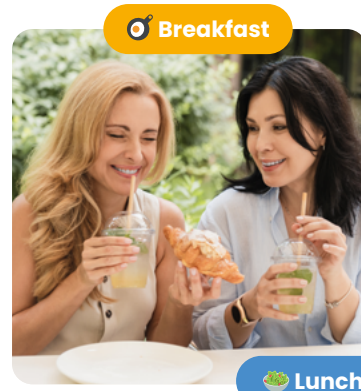


Geographic segmentation

This form of segmentation is based on where your customers live or work. For example, a restaurant located in a business district may have a segment for office workers looking for lunch options. Another example: developing specific campaigns for restaurant chains operating in Québec in French and based on different preferences.

Behavioral segmentation

This involves grouping customers based on their dining behavior – such as frequency of dining, preferred meal times (breakfast, lunch, or dinner), spending patterns, or menu preferences. For instance, you could have a segment for 'weekend brunch enthusiasts' who visit your restaurant for its popular weekend brunch offerings.





Psychographic segmentation

This divides customers based on lifestyle, personality traits, values, or interests. For instance, a fast-casual restaurant may have a segment for 'vegan or health-conscious diners,' who value healthy, plant-based food options.

Loyalty segmentation

This is based on the loyalty level of customers. Some customers are regulars who visit frequently, while others might only come in occasionally. For example, 'VIP Customers' who dine at your restaurant at least once a week.





Personalized messages

Harness the power of customer data to design personalized marketing messages. From targeted promotions and menu recommendations to loyalty rewards, personalization creates a unique customer experience that can boost loyalty and engagement.

➔ Here are some examples of sending personalized messages:

Birthday/Anniversary greetings



Happy Birthday, [Customer's Name]! 🎉 Celebrate your special day with us and enjoy a complimentary dessert on the house 🍰

3 min ago

Re-engaging customers you haven't seen in a while



We've missed you, [Customer's Name]! Come dine with us again and enjoy a 15% discount on your next meal 🍴

3 min ago

Specific food preferences



Hello, [Customer's Name], We thought you'd like to know that your favorite dish, [Dish Name], is the special of the day! Drop by to get 10% off! 🍷

3 min ago

Personal achievements or milestones



Congratulations on being our valued customer for over 5 years, [Customer's Name]! Celebrate your milestone with us! 🎊 We're offering 15% off your next online order! 🍷

3 min ago

Rewarding loyalty



Dear [Customer's Name], Thank you for being a loyal customer! ❤️ You've earned enough points for a free appetizer on your next visit.

3 min ago

Seasonal or holiday messages



Happy Holidays, [Customer's Name]! Have you seen our festive menu created especially for this Holiday season? Access it here: URL. You have until December 31 to enjoy it! 🎄🍷🎉

3 min ago

Event reminders



Hello [Customer's Name], don't forget about our wine tasting event this Friday 🍷 We look forward to seeing you there! 🍷

3 min ago





Evaluating marketing performance

Customer data can be used to determine the effectiveness of your marketing channels, like social media, email, or ads. This allows you to invest only in the marketing actions that generate the highest return on investment.

You might start by analyzing sales data. This involves closely observing your restaurant's sales figures before and after you've launched a marketing campaign.

An aspect to consider is customer acquisition. By tracking the number of new customers your restaurant has garnered during a specific marketing initiative, you can gauge whether your campaign has been successful in drawing new clientele. An influx of first-time customers during or shortly after a campaign generally suggests that your marketing efforts have been effective.

Yet attracting new customers is only one part of the equation. Equally important is your ability to retain existing ones. If your data shows that repeat customers are visiting more frequently or that their numbers have increased post-campaign, this usually implies that your marketing campaign has not only piqued interest but also fostered loyalty.

By analyzing your customers based on their dining behavior, such as frequency of dining, preferred meal times, or average spend, you can tailor your offers to generate more sales. For example, you might decide to offer a special lunch menu or early bird discounts based on these insights.

Finally, the power of customer sentiment should never be underestimated. Actively monitoring online reviews and customer feedback on social media during the campaign period can give you insights into your customers' perceptions and experiences.

Sales data



Customer acquisition



Repeat customers



Dining behavior



Customer feedback





Optimized operations

Customer data isn't just valuable for marketing efforts, it's also important in optimizing restaurant operations.

Understanding customer preferences can play a significant role in refining your restaurant's menu and inventory management. If data indicates that certain dishes are more popular than others, you might decide to highlight those dishes on the menu, offer variations of them, or even develop promotions around them. On the flip side, items that are rarely ordered might be candidates for removal, making way for new dishes and reducing waste.

Reservation and seating data can also inform decisions about restaurant operations. If your restaurant sees a rush during certain hours, you can adjust staffing levels to ensure you're adequately prepared to handle the increased

traffic or consider self-service kiosks to support you during peak periods. This helps in maintaining a high level of customer service and increases customer satisfaction.

Feedback from customers, whether collected through surveys, reviews, or social media, is another valuable data source. Customer comments can provide insights into areas that need improvement. For instance, if multiple customers mention long wait times, it might be time to assess and streamline your serving process with new technology solutions, for example [table ordering solutions](#) and [self-ordering kiosks](#).





How to collect data

So, how can a restaurant collect customer data?

→ Here are some easy ways.

When guests visit your dining room, or stop by for takeout and curbside pick-up, ask for their phone numbers and email addresses so that you can send them exclusive promotions, first dibs on menu items and products that are offered in limited quantities, contests, etc.



As customers use your online ordering platform, ask them for permission to send them emails, newsletters or text messages to keep them up-to-date on everything new at your restaurant.



On your website and social media, highlight the advantages customers will get by signing up for emails, newsletters or text messages from your restaurant. Giving their contact information allows them to stay updated with the latest happenings at your restaurant, such as new menu additions, events, and themed nights. Subscribers often get exclusive access to special offers, discounts, and promotional deals, helping them enjoy their favorite meals at reduced prices.

 **Themed nights**

 **Menu additions**

 **Special offers**



Setting for long-term customer loyalty:

Creating emotional connections

According to consumer behaviour experts at Circana, today's diners are increasingly choosing their restaurants based on emotional drivers, rather than solely on convenience.

This shift underscores the importance of creating a deep emotional connection with customers. It's no longer simply about the food or service. It is also about the feelings and emotional responses that dining or ordering at your restaurant generates. Perhaps it's the sense of nostalgia in a family-owned Italian trattoria, the thrill of trying something new at a fusion restaurant, or the joy and warmth that comes from eating at a neighbourhood eatery.

Restaurant branding and marketing now have to appeal to these emotional drivers. A powerful emotional driver for restaurants is storytelling. Every restaurant has a unique origin, a distinctive journey, or a dedicated commitment to specific values, such as sourcing local ingredients or promoting sustainable practices. When customers learn about these narratives, they often feel more connected to the establishment, fostering a sense of loyalty and deepening their overall dining experience.



Community involvement can greatly help restaurants to foster an emotional connection with their patrons. When a restaurant is actively engaged in community events or local causes, it resonates with the customers who value societal contributions. This can range from sponsoring local sports teams, participating in community festivals, to supporting non-profit organizations. Customers often hold a favorable view of businesses that contribute positively to their community, and this can enhance their emotional attachment to the restaurant.



Another potent emotional driver is customers' perceived value. Perceived value can take on a number of different definitions. For example, [due to today's inflation rates, some customers are cutting back on dining out and focusing on restaurants that offer discounts, freebies and competitive loyalty programs.](#)

Another example of perceived value? Speed of service. Today's time-strapped customers crave speed and convenience. They don't want to wait in queues at the cashier or at the table before a waiter comes and sees them. That's why an increasing number of restaurateurs are investing in [tablesideself-service solutions](#) and [digital self-service kiosks](#) to accelerate service levels. Studies have shown that [when a restaurant can reduce waiting time, it influences customer behaviour for repeat business and increases revenue.](#)

According to consumer behaviour experts at Circana, today's diners are increasingly choosing their restaurants based on emotional drivers.



Top 2025

Marketing strategies for restaurants



Strategy 1

Elevate your web presence

Just because you have a website, doesn't mean you cannot make small tweaks that will make a huge difference in terms of online discoverability, brand awareness and engagement.

➔ **Here are some ideas to get your creative juices flowing:**



Think about the customer journey and what your customers' intent are when they visit your website; this will guide you into designing a more intuitive interface. Simple is always better.



Make your online ordering options, online reservations, promotions, loyalty/rewards program more visible.



Include customer testimonials and update them frequently.



Add pictures of your meals and rewrite your menu descriptions to make them more mouth-watering to potential customers.



Develop a news/blog section to keep customers informed about the latest happenings at your establishment.



Remember: a website or Facebook page alone is not enough. Consider developing your social media presence on other channels and updating your Google Business Profile.



Strategy 2

Never underestimate the power of online reviews

Online reviews hold significant power in shaping the reputation and success of restaurants in today's digital age. Did you know that [over 33% of customers will not visit a restaurant if it has “only” a three-star review?](#)

Whether you're an independent or major chain, online reviews for each restaurant location must be nourished and maintained. These include Google reviews, Facebook and other social media, and [online review sites dedicated specifically to restaurants](#).

Some studies show that [9 out of 10 customers say reviews play a role in discovering a local business, with 54.7% of them reading at least 4 reviews prior to purchasing](#).

You can check out some [best practices for your restaurant's online reviews here](#).

Worried about getting a negative review from time to time? Don't be! Contrary to what you may think, a minor complaint (also known as a blemish) within a list of positive reviews, can actually increase the perceived authenticity and trustworthiness of your ratings. A review track record that's too perfect can often seem suspicious and may lead potential customers to question its credibility. So address the few negative reviews you have. View them as a way to contribute to a more authentic online presence and show your commitment to continuous improvement.

**Jonathan Bradley**

★★★★☆ 3 months ago

This is always our breakfast stop before heading home from vacation. Always delicious. Always great service. Always worth the stop.

**Leila Yacoub**

★★★★☆ 5 months ago

I visited The Cozy Fork recently and found it to be an average dining experience. The ambiance was cozy, but the menu lacked variety. I ordered the fried chicken, which was well-cooked but a bit bland. The service was friendly, though a bit slow. Overall, it's a decent spot for a casual meal, but I expected more from the food.





Strategy 3

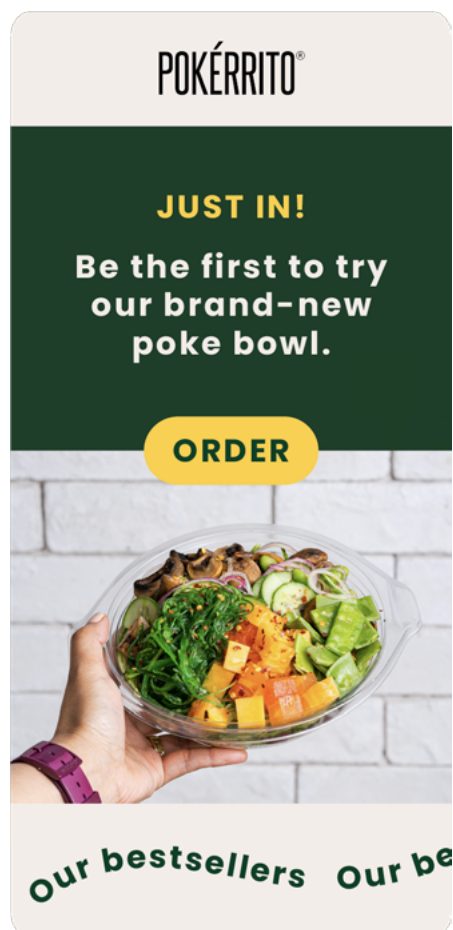
Up your email and newsletter game

One of the most under-utilized marketing tactics for restaurateurs is email and newsletter campaigns.

Once you get customers' permission to email them, you can use marketing automation software to create new touchpoints with them. Newsletters, sent out on a monthly basis, can inform customers about any contests, deals or menu changes you have got going on.

➔ Here are some examples:

- Invite your best customers to visit more often by offering them a discount applicable only on Tuesday or Wednesday.
- Takeout customers could receive an email to let them know a hot seasonal menu item is back on the menu—and ask if they would want to add it to their order.
- To set up your email marketing game plan, read this article.
- Stay top of mind by sending a promotion or new item announcement just before lunch if you are in a professional neighborhood, or just before dinner in a family neighborhood.



To set up your email marketing game plan, read this [article](#).





Strategy 4

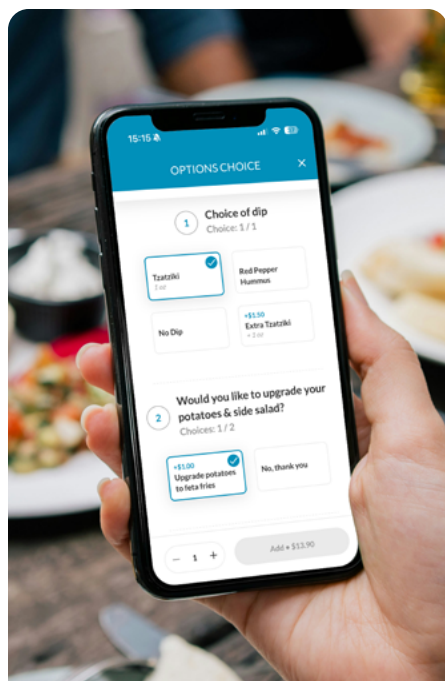
Reconsider your online ordering platform

Online ordering platforms for restaurants are not all created equally. Their functionalities, design, support levels, pricing, and ease of use vary significantly. Many restaurant owners have discovered that free online ordering solutions often come with poor design, restricted feature sets and limited integrations.

Moreover, not all platforms are designed with the user in mind. Several make the process of placing an order and paying for it a challenge with multiple, complicated steps. Even more surprisingly, most of them simply don't have upselling and cross-selling capabilities. When they do, they lack a subtle, non-intrusive approach that could help to boost average ticket sizes.

Given these considerations, it's crucial for restaurants to carefully assess the performance and simplicity of their current online ordering systems. If the platform in use is causing more complications than solving, or not living up to its promised efficiency, it might be high time to consider a change. Opting for a more effective solution could not only enhance the ordering process for customers but also potentially lead to significant increases in average order value and overall business growth.

UEAT offers a powerful online ordering solution tailored for restaurants, enabling seamless ordering experiences with advanced features like AI-driven upselling and deep integration with POS systems. Its easy-to-use platform boosts average order value and enhances customer engagement, making it an attractive option for optimizing restaurant operations and profitability.

[Click here to know more](#)

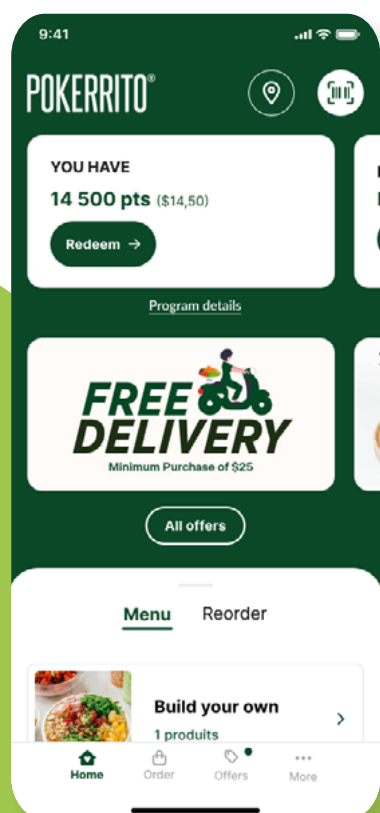
+\$1.00
Upgrade potatoes
to feta fries

Takeout



Strategy 5

Get your very own mobile app



With today's mobile-first generations, a high percentage of purchases are now made on mobile devices. Apps have the advantage of keeping customers connected to the service and removing the need to enter an address every time, thereby speeding up the ordering and payment process.

However, building a white-label app—and maintaining it for performance and features—can cost a lot of money when doing it in-house or via IT professionals. Be sure to shop around for the right mobile app developer; be sure to inquire about support levels, the frequency of updates and all the services provided to keep your mobile app current and performing at a level that justifies the investment.

UEAT mobile app provides a customized and user-friendly ordering experience for customers, allowing restaurants to have their own branded app without the need to invest in developing one from scratch. With UEAT's expertise, restaurants get a fully optimized solution with push notifications and real-time updates to drive repeat business and customer loyalty.

[Click here to know more](#)

NEXT REWARD
Free Tiramisu
Buy one tiramisu - the fifth is free



EARNED!
Free fries

Redeem →



Strategy 6

Rethink your on-site marketing

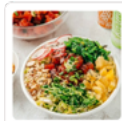
On-site, traditional advertising, like signage and merchandising techniques still hold significant value in today's restaurant industry.

They provide instant information and attract immediate attention of potential customers. In a fast-paced world, a well-designed, compelling sign can quickly grab the attention of passersby, enticing them to visit the restaurant.

Moreover, tangible displays like menu boards, chalkboards or table tents are effective at promoting daily specials or new dishes, leading to impulsive buying decisions.

But don't ignore digital altogether!





Build your own
1 item



On-premise marketing allows restaurateurs to reach consumers in real-time when they are in a precisely defined geofenced location, such as at your restaurant or in surrounding businesses, or areas within walking distance.

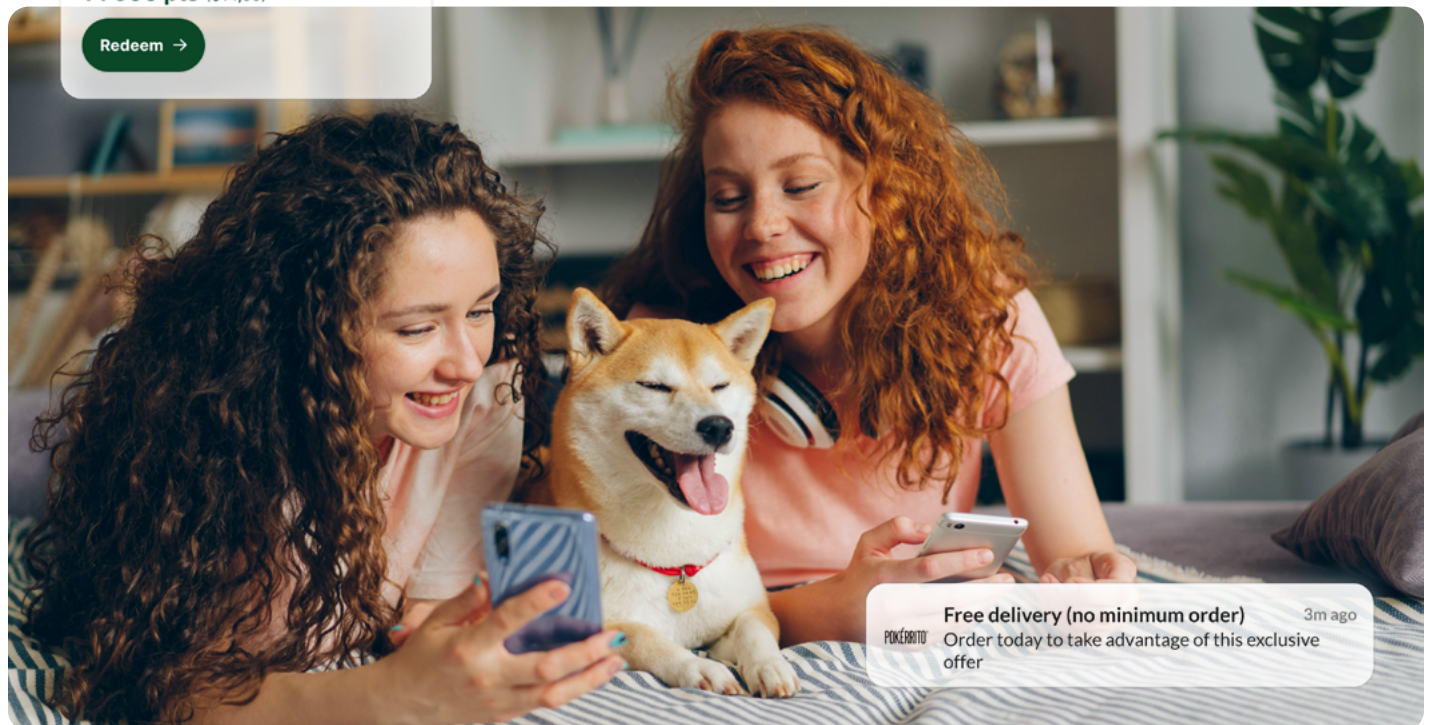
Wi-Fi marketing, when a restaurant provides Wi-Fi access to customers and then uses that channel to communicate messages to them via their smartphones, laptops and tablets, has proven to be successful for many restaurateurs. To gain access to your Wi-Fi, users must first view content that you push to them. A Wi-Fi marketing system can be programmed so that the customer must return to the original content after they have been connected for a certain period of time.

And leverage your menu boards and self-service kiosks in your restaurants to display promotions, new menu items, exclusive promotions, and more.

YOU HAVE

14 500 pts (\$14,50)

Redeem →



Free delivery (no minimum order)

3m ago

POKÉBENTO

Order today to take advantage of this exclusive offer



Strategy 7

Revamp your loyalty program



Today's astute and fickle consumers will no longer settle for loyalty programs that are akin to punching holes in a card that is likely to be lost. Did you know that [increasing loyalty by 5% can increase profits by 25-95%?](#)

Modern loyalty programs come in many forms, each with its own set of benefits.

➔ **Here are some examples:**



Tiered programs: In tiered loyalty programs, customers advance through different levels or 'tiers' based on their spending. Each tier offers increasingly appealing benefits. This encourages customers to visit more frequently or spend more to reach the next level and unlock additional perks.



Visit-based programs: In these programs, rewards are earned based on the number of visits rather than the amount spent. This can be a great option for restaurants with a wide range of price points on their menu, as it encourages frequent visits without requiring high spending.



Point-based programs: This is one of the most common types of loyalty programs. Customers earn points for every dollar they spend, which can then be redeemed for rewards like discounts, free items, or special experiences.



Membership programs: Some restaurants offer membership-based loyalty programs, where customers pay an upfront fee for access to exclusive benefits. These might include substantial discounts on all purchases, members-only events, or free items.



Hybrid programs: Some restaurants opt for a hybrid approach. These are a mix of the above, offering both points for spending and additional rewards for frequent visits or membership. This provides multiple incentives for customers to return.



Freemium loyalty programs: Consumers get basic rewards on a free program, but can enjoy additional discounts and rewards on a paid plan. Some examples? DoorDash launched DashPass and Uber launched Uber One. [You can expect this approach to gain in popularity.](#)

But how to maximize the success of a restaurant loyalty program?

First, simplicity is key. Your loyalty program should be easy to understand and participate in. If customers find it confusing or complicated, they're less likely to engage. A straightforward points-for-rewards system or a simple visit-based program can often be effective.

Next, make the rewards meaningful. Offering genuinely valuable rewards will encourage customers to return again and again. This could range from discounts to free menu items.

Far from only rewarding purchases, loyalty programs must reward customers for other types of desired behaviour, including providing contact information, social media engagement, writing a review, filling out a survey. Rewards must also be more appealing—and not just a 5% discount on customers' next orders. These could be invitations to exclusive experiences and events or priority reservations, for example.

Communication is crucial. Regularly remind your customers about their loyalty program benefits, and keep them updated about their points or rewards status. This can be done through email, text messages, or even a dedicated app.



Strategy 8

Be creative with your delivery/takeout/ curbside pick-up packaging



Packaging is the physical representation of your brand's personality. But it can go the extra mile way beyond "only" brand awareness. Want to strengthen your promotional success? Why not replicate to a certain degree the experience customers enjoy when they unpack an Apple product?

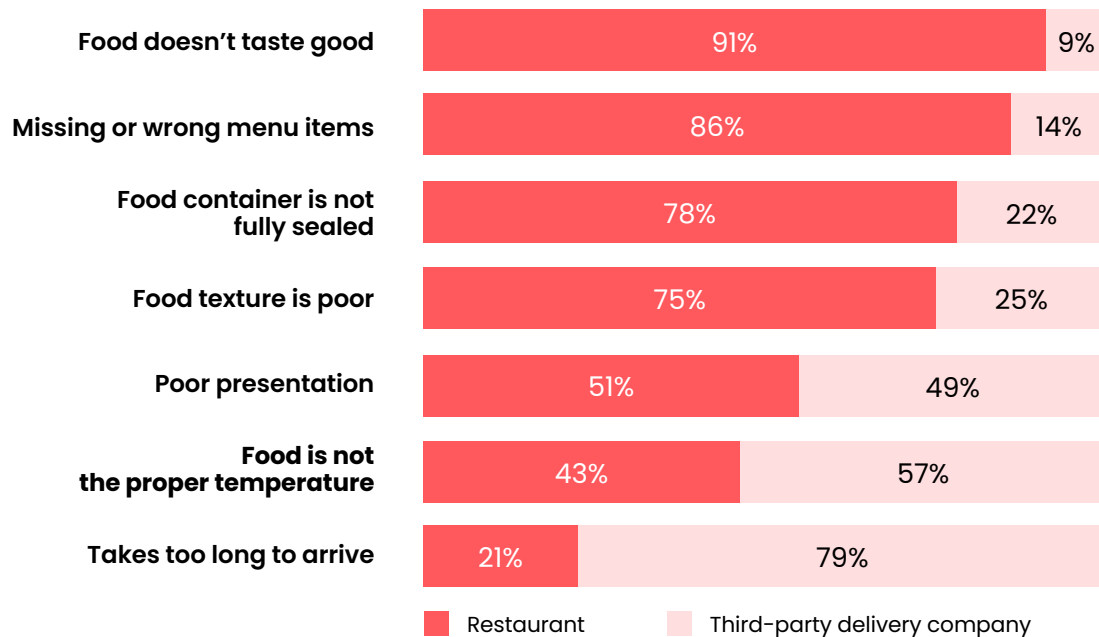
Imagine when your customers receive their orders for delivery, takeout and curbside pick-up. As they open the bags, they are not just greeted with their meals. They also get a flyer with exclusive access to upcoming or for-a-limited-time only specials? Maybe you can add a recipe or two.

Promote your online ordering or exclusive online ordering dishes with a promo code. Think of other ways to get customers coming back—and using your online ordering or mobile app more frequently.



Canadian Delivery & Takeout

IF THE FOLLOWING ISSUES ARISE WHEN ORDERING DELIVERY VIA THIRD-PARTY, I WOULD BLAME THE...



Don't underestimate the packaging, especially if a third-party delivery partner takes care of your home deliveries to customers. The following graph shows the results of a recent Technomic survey UEAT ordered that shows who customers blame for issues with their food deliveries.





Trendy

Marketing strategies for restaurants

2025



Strategy 1

Invest in hyper-local marketing

One of the most important restaurant marketing strategies you should consider adopting is [hyper-local marketing](#).

Because restaurants are location-driven businesses, you want to make sure you attract diners that are in the neighborhood.

Optimizing your online presence is vital. Focus on local SEO by utilizing location-specific keywords, updating your Google Business Profile, and ensuring your business information is consistent across platforms. Pair this with geo-targeted ads, and search engine optimization to reach potential customers within your area. You can [read about more best practices for location-based marketing for restaurants here](#).

In addition, building strong community ties can significantly boost your local appeal. Establish partnerships with local suppliers, farmers, artisans, and promote these relationships to emphasize your commitment to the community. Complement these efforts with in-store promotions or discounts targeted specifically at local residents or nearby businesses. This can help generate foot traffic and cultivate a loyal local customer base.

You can also collaborate with local influencers, food bloggers, or community figures to widen your audience reach and create engaging promotional content. Think about contacting local media outlets, such as newspapers, magazines, or online publications, to share news and updates about your restaurant. These actions can go a long way in drumming up business...for your business!



Strategy 2

Get ready for voice and AI search

Around 58% of US consumers use voice search functions, such as those offered by virtual assistants (Alexa and Siri, to name a few), on a regular basis.

And it won't be too long before they will begin using them to order food for takeout or delivery, make reservations at your restaurant, etc.



Consider working with your website team or expert to develop content that caters to natural language and questions. This can significantly improve your ranking in voice search results. Think of how a customer would use Alexa or Siri to find your restaurant or look for restaurants that offer your cuisine.

➔ **Here are some examples:**

Hey Siri, what are the top-rated Italian restaurants near me? I am in Moncton.

Alexa, find vegan-friendly restaurants in downtown Edmonton.

Okay Google, are there any seafood restaurants open now within a five-kilometer radius in Winnipeg?

Hey Siri, where can I find a restaurant that serves gluten-free options in Halifax?

Alexa, look up the menu for The Farmhouse Restaurant in Toronto.

Then, adapt the content on your website and your Google Business Profile.



On the front-of-the-house side, conversational AI in the form of chatbots or voice assistants can greatly enhance the customer experience. These tools can handle customer support, and reservations, and even provide personalized menu recommendations, offering a streamlined and efficient service. A comprehensive FAQ page on your website can help answer common customer questions related to your restaurant, menu, and services, thereby increasing the likelihood of being referenced by conversational AI. Even drive-thrus are now using AI to take orders.

Customer support



Reservations



**Personalized menu
recommendations**



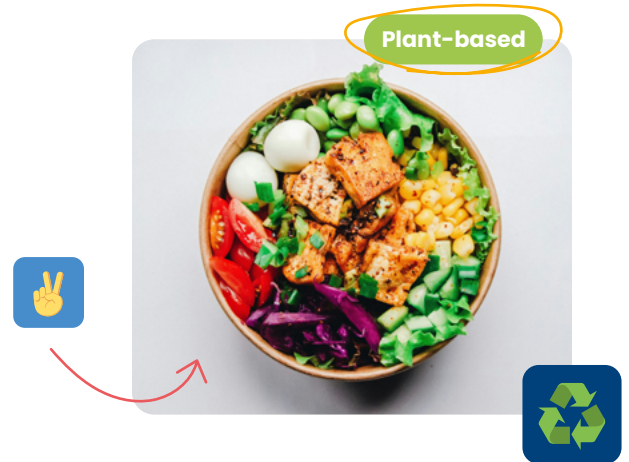
**Answer common
customer questions**





Strategy 3

Promote your sustainability practices



Experts say that younger consumers are willing to pay an average premium of 20% for sustainable meals at restaurants.

With today's eco-conscious consumers putting their dollars into businesses that are committed to the environment, restaurateurs need to show customers what they are doing to help the planet.

If you haven't already, it is time to develop a marketing strategy with a green twist.

Start by determining what you can realistically accomplish. Is it using locally-sourced ingredients or seasonal produce, and offering plant-based options? How are you contributing to reducing waste, avoiding plastics, composting, or any other sustainable initiative you have in place? Do you reward customers who bring their own containers? Is your restaurant part of a park or beach cleanup activity?

Make sure you promote what you do across your marketing channels to raise awareness among existing and potential customers. But be honest! Savvy customers can easily detect if a business embellishes or misrepresents its commitment to sustainability. Never greenwash! Stay honest and transparent!

Need help on how you can win over more customers, especially digital natives?

Check out what UEAT can do for you.

Watch demo



UEAT
A MONERIS COMPANY ©