

Focus on Recent Trends And Challenges In The Restaurant Industry

As the COVID-19 crisis has strongly impacted the restaurant industry, the industry must meet challenges to generate sustainable growth in the post-pandemic world.

Specifically, there are ten key challenges:

- Restaurants will have to optimize customer traffic as they must make up for the loss during the pandemic. They have to get back to a pre-crisis financial situation. However, it is essential to acknowledge that while the greediest will run to the restaurant, some people will still be reluctant to get together with many people without barrier gestures, masks, and social distancing.
- Improvements in customer experience at these restaurants are vital. Customers will no longer be passionate only about their food but also about the setting and atmosphere of the restaurant. Some customers may still choose to pick up their orders from restaurants and eat at home. But for them to feel comfortable returning to their pre-COVID lifestyle of dining out, restaurateurs need to adapt and create a new, exciting and unique atmosphere for their restaurants.
- Restaurant staff must return to work. As in many other industries, employees have been at home telecommuting or doing nothing, and their motivation to return to work and morale has been low. Restaurateurs must find ways to compensate and motivate them to want to come back and be part of their staff.
- Restaurants must find ways to source quality products despite the financial difficulties. Today, quality has become a fashion statement. Customers are looking for quality in every aspect of the restaurants they visit. The products offered on the menu must be of high quality, locally sourced, organic, and healthy.
- Alcoholic beverage choices will continue to be a priority for restaurateurs as it is a significant revenue generator. There may be a reluctance to share drinks with others in the post-COVID environment, which can be another challenge for restaurant owners.
- COVID-19 has increased consumer awareness of healthy and organic food choices. Restaurants must consider offering creative dishes attractive to vegetarians and vegans in addition to using organic meats, fish, poultry, vegetables, and fruits.
- Preventing unnecessary waste is imperative in today's environmentally conscious environment. Waste represents critical financial losses. Restaurant owners must lead in finding solutions to protect the environment and prevent famine while adapting to societal priorities and requirements

- The consumer demand for social networks increased dramatically during the COVID lockdowns and is here to stay. Restaurateurs will have to participate and be active on these networks, not necessarily to comment on other publications or recipes but to reassure, attract and build loyalty among consumers.
- Restaurant owners need to reduce the menu choices. A varied and long menu represents more preparation time, staffing, but above all, a high cost in maintaining a variety of ingredients, particularly if imported from other countries and regions. They must review their menus and offer a core selection of dishes using locally sourced fresh and organic products.
- COVID-19 has forced the restaurant business to become digital. Technologies including robust websites, click & collect, digital cards, and convenient home deliveries are critical technological solutions for the business to sustain and grow in the post-COVID environment.



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