



AHAR

Hospitality

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**FOOD COST
THAT MATTERS**

**SALES AND
PROFITABLE
SALES**

**KNOW APC IN
YOUR BUSINESS**

**RESTAURANT
BUSINESS
AND SPECIALIST
/ADVISER HELP**

**PICKING UP A
FRANCHISE OF A
FOOD BUSINESS**

**THE PLASTIC
CARRY BAG BAN
AND ITS IMPACT
ON RESTAURANTS**

**HOW TO RANK
AMONG THE
TOPMOST
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Dear Esteemed Members,

Year 2015 brought lots of kudos to AHAR as the country is witnessing upward trends in terms of growth and the proverbial feel good factor. The nation is receiving a massive welcome in the global arena, having become a global manufacturing hub through the Make In India campaign initiated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and supported enthusiastically by all states of the union and the government machinery. A glance at the outlook of the nation's hospitality industry reveal there are huge opportunities for the hotels and restaurant community due to an envisaged, massive influx of business visitors and tourists into India, which will translate into sumptuous spends of foreign currencies within the country.



The timely action and escalation of issues during preceding years yielded the much needed relief to the industry which is reeling under huge pressure from various quarters such as the Amendment to Maharashtra Rent control Act, various archaic laws, licenses, permits, certificates and NOCs. These issues have tendencies to retard the growth of what can be otherwise, a buoyant, flourishing sector. Team work brought about excellent results in every area of operations.

Warm Regards
S. Suchithra

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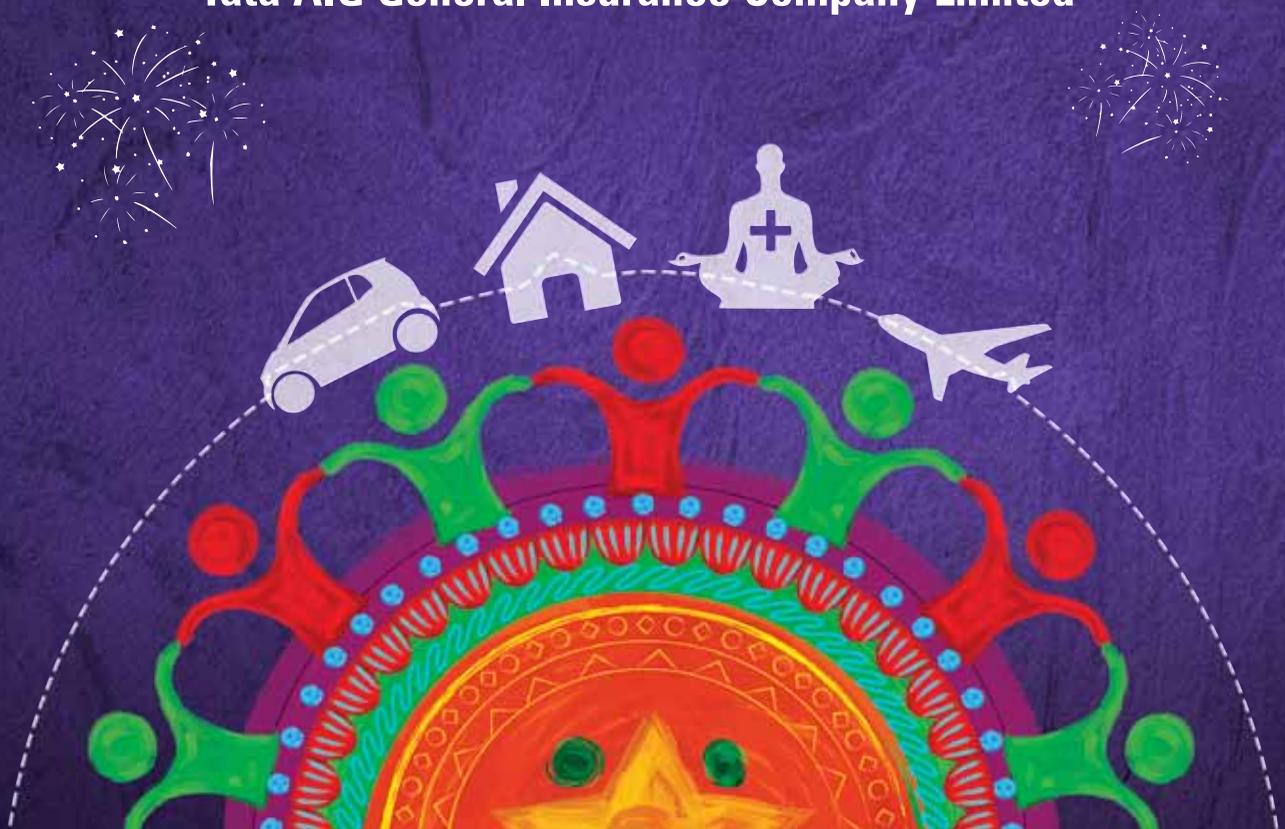
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From Managing Editor's Desk...

Dear Esteemed Members,

Over the interlude of time, our association is facing tremendous challenges from law makers and various authorities. One of the crippling areas is the Amendments to Maharashtra Rent Control Act which is adversely impacting the growth of hotels and restaurants, since such establishments are categorized as 'Pugree Tenants'. Similarly, the tenants of MbPT are also being served 'Eviction Notices' by wrongly invoking the 'Public Premises Act' or 'Lease Not Renewed' clause or 'Unauthorized Occupants' laws which are being indiscriminately applied to business owner and residents despite paying rents and all taxes on schedule, for more than 40 years and in some cases many generations. AHAR is making every effort to address these issues in the best possible manner, along with other stake holders. In this direction AHAR seeks the support of each and every member, since it will help to achieve the much desired 'OWNERSHIP' status. While we introspect on the statistics of the restaurant business, there were as many as 100 plus eateries from the organized sector which shut down in Mumbai within just the last two to three years, based on our own statistics. There were many reasons for this, including outdated laws which provide the perfect breeding ground for corruption. The problem is further aggravated due to the large number of licenses investors are required to procure prior to opening a food outlet. To start and operate a restaurant, one needs to obtain anywhere between 30 to nearly 50 licenses, permits, certificates and NOCs. With prompt action and representations to ministers, concerned officials including the city's Municipal Commissioner and other authorities, many archaic laws have been abolished or simplified under the PM's vision of 'Ease of Doing Business'. Unlike any other industry, the hospitality sector is also taking leaps and bounds in the fast changing technological arena and the implementation of Information Technology tools to ensure that restaurants do not lag behind in such advancements. This in turn enhances productivity and profitability. I am sure that most members might have implemented the billing and inventory software which is vital, as manual errors have been totally wiped out and precise balance of accounts could be seen at any given point of time at hotels and

restaurants. Similarly, installation of Close Circuit Cameras (CCTVs) also helped enhanced security and imparted a sense of well being among all stakeholders, including restaurant owners, service crew and customers. Moreover, CCTVs helps keep tabs on the happenings at restaurants through mobile connectivity. This, in turn translates into reduction of accidents, thus saving vital man hours and ensuring safer working conditions for staff. In this issue we cover many topics based on the issues impacting our industry which leads to revision of food cost. There are various means by which one can calculate the actual cost of a particular dish or food stuff. The article 'Restaurant Business and Specialist Help' is most useful as many a time we are encounter a road block where specialist advise would be handy to resolve any bottlenecks. We have also presented an article for the maximizing profitability of restaurants which would be useful to many who would otherwise resort to cost cutting. We have also expressed our views on buying or adding a restaurant and what we need to avoid and how one can save cost. In addition, we discuss happenings in the franchise modules of doing business and its various vagaries and nuances We feature a report on spiraling costs affecting the industry in whole. The report on 'Average Price Per Customer' will throw some light on the cost versus profit. The article on income sources from restaurants discusses the nitty-gritty of the restaurant business where higher profit can be achieved through systematic planning and use of resources. Finally, the ban on use of plastic products, where hotels and restaurants are being targeted and the alternate ways of addressing the menace, also makes useful reading in this issue.

Happy reading
 Bhaskar K Shetty
 Managing Editor
 bhaskarshetty007@gmail.com

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From the President's desk

Dear Members,

This year is expected to fetch some cheerful results to our industry. The efforts of many years by AHAR in simplifying the licensing conditions with various authorities are bearing the results now. Foremost is the repealing of Police Registration Certificate for Restaurants and PPEL [Place of Public Performance License] for Permit Rooms and similar restaurants by the state government under the PM's pet project 'Ease of Doing Business'. I personally thank all the past presidents, office bearers and the present team for rigorous follow up in these matters, approaching the government through all possible sources and ultimately getting the results, which will result in minimizing the harassment of our members and other, on flimsy pretexts by concerned departments. Another happy development is simplification of the licensing conditions by the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai. The requirement of Grading for Restaurants and Madira License for Permit Rooms have been abrogated. Several rules were simplified. Due to our constant approach and persuasion the FL-III License fees for the current year remains unchanged. Another landmark judgment by the Supreme Court of India is the stay on rule 33 A of police which also directs the state government to renew the licenses of dance bars within stipulated period. We have also met the state finance minister with a request to roll back the increase in VAT under the Composite Scheme for Restaurants. The VAT was hiked from 5 percent to 8 percent for restaurants, whose turnover was above Rs. 3 crores in the previous year. We have urged the government to either roll back or increase the threshold turnover limit to Rs. 5 crores. We hope our request, in the larger interest of the hospitality industry, will be considered positively. As a responsible organization and a frontrunner to address the social cause of draught which has severely affected large parts of Maharashtra and as part of our Corporate Social Responsibility, AHAR had contributed an amount of

Rs. 20 lakhs to Maharashtra Chief Minister's Drought Relief Fund. We had also submitted our memorandum to the chief minister to do away with unnecessary paperwork and procedures under the PM's pet project 'Ease of Doing Business' in various licensing formalities to minimize the harassment to the legally run businesses. We are hopeful that in the days to come the licensing conditions of the MCGM, police, Excise Department and others, will be further simplified. As the president of this association, I advise all restaurateurs and hoteliers members of AHAR as follows: 1 Support the national initiative to SAVE WATER. 1 Prudent and judicious use of water resources since Maharashtra is reeling under severe water scarcity. 1 Maintain updated documentary evidence such as proof of age of all employees of the hotel / restaurant through collecting and retaining copies of Aadhar Card, PAN Card, Voter ID Card etc. in a separate files or record to produce for verification, checking etc. by the police and labor authorities. 1 Comply with the Restaurant Fire and Safety Act by complying with requirements of MCGM including obtaining NOC from Fire Brigade as per the simplified norms. 1 Give special attention towards the hygiene of the restaurant.

With the above, I sign off

Wishing you all, very happy summer holidays..

Adarsh Shetty

President

adarshshetty69@gmail.com

Another happy development is simplification of the licensing conditions by the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai. The requirement of Grading for Restaurants and Madira License for Permit Rooms have been abrogated. Several rules were simplified. Due to our constant approach and persuasion the FL-III License fees for the current year remains unchanged.



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- Open new a/c



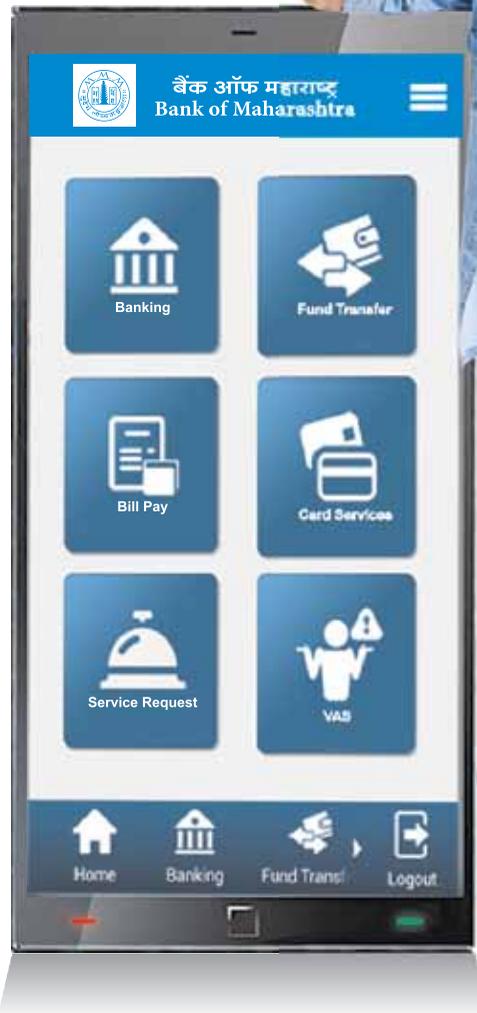
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From Hon. Gen. Secretary's Desk

Dear Members,

The endeavor and efficient work of the past and present office bearers is bearing fruits. The simplification of rules and regulations of the Police and MCGM such as abolition of Police License and Grade License etc, is a welcome move benefitting to our industry. It is always the endeavor of AHAR to convince authorities to simplify the decades old rules and regulations, repeal unnecessary or avoidable regulations, do away with duplications, and make licensing conditions simple, understandable, and easily compliant. As you are aware we are dealing with many legal entangles with various departments in various courts of law to safeguard the interest of not only our members but also for the entire hospitality fraternity. We need huge funds to bring the legal cases to the logical ends to benefit AHAR members and the hotel industry. It is our earnest request to all restaurateurs and hoteliers of Mumbai city and suburbs to voluntarily pool their resources as contribution towards legal fund of AHAR. We should build a healthy corpus fund, so that we can employ well known legal luminaries to defend our cases and obtain justice. We need members to be aware of the rules and regulations of various laws of different departments, so that the authorities can't take the

member community for a ride by applying wrong charges, harassments etc. AHAR always guides the members to be on the right side of the law. Any complaint of injustice against any authority should be submitted in writing to the vice presidents of the zone, who will in turn discuss it in the meetings, consult with the sub-committee chairmen, experts and proper guidance could be provided to all members. We invite earnest involvement of all members of our association in various activities of AHAR from time to time and make it a strong platform; this will help to address various grievances of our members at the earliest. We are open for suggestions.

Wish you and family a very happy summer vacations.

With regards,

Santosh R Shetty

Hon. Gen. Secretary
jagdambarefreshments@hotmail.com

It is our earnest request to all restaurateurs and hoteliers of Mumbai city and suburbs to voluntarily pool their resources as contribution towards legal fund of AHAR. We should build a healthy corpus fund, so that we can employ well known legal luminaries to defend our cases and obtain justice.



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Food cost that matters

By S. Suchithra



Control Your Portion Size for Better Cost Control

If you own a restaurant or bar then you know how important it is to determine the cost of food and drinks to form a realistic price for menu items that guarantees profits for your catering facility. That the key to success in this business is to figure out a way to get your customers to pay as much as possible for food that does not cost much to produce.

Currently, on the market, you may find defined prices for drinks and meals that more or less vary depending on what kind of facility we are talking about, whether it is a milk bar, restaurant. However, these small differences in price in a long term can have a big impact on the overall operations of your restaurant or bar. They are more evident if, for example, we compare the prices of cocktails in various bars.

How to determine the price for menu items that will suit you and your guests too?

Actually, it is very easy.

Let's take an example of an Indian restaurant - let's say

they have an item "Paneer Butter Masala" on their menu. Let's say the cost of all the ingredients works out to about Rs. 40. Multiplied by either 4 or 5 to get an earnings of 75% and 80% respectively. Keep the dish price at Rs. 120 (33% food cost). Now if the cost of Paneer and some of the other ingredients goes up by 20%, it may result in a small 10-15% increase in the cost of the dish (so the cost is now Rs. 46). To keep the food cost at 33%, the price of the dish now has to be Rs. 138 (a price you won't be able to charge your customer). In the last 2/3 years, inflation has taken a huge toll on the prices of ingredients, pushing costs up. This has made it very challenging for restaurant business owners (especially the budget restaurants) to maintain their profitability.

Common Mistakes during Food Cost Calculation

Most common mistakes have been usually made during the creation of ingredient list for each menu item. Be sure to pay special attention when doing this job. It is necessary to involve your main chef in this process or someone who knows the best each recipe. Where do you need to pay



particular attention?

- The type of food used for the preparation of specific drink or meal.
- The exact amount of each ingredient for the preparation of food or drink.
- The quality of raw materials used for a preparation of food or drink.
- The amount of allowable drip loss for certain foods.
- Don't forget that the drip loss occurs during:
 - Cleaning
 - Cutting and formatting
 - Cooling and storage
 - Heat treatment (cooking, frying, and baking).

Control Your Portion Size for Better Cost Control

Once you've formed prices for all menu items that guarantee profits and are reasonable and affordable for your guests you need to pay attention to the quality of the raw materials used as ingredients for food preparation

and control of portion size.

The success of big restaurant chains lies mainly in control of portion sizes. Each portion should be the same size and grammage. In this way, you can properly track food costs and make almost perfect calculation when creating final prices and your profit.

Tips: To control portion size use precision scales, measuring cups, adjusted containers for storage of ingredients that are often used in large quantities such as flour, oil, potatoes and similar foods. You plates and glasses that you use for serving must be of equal volume.

Train your staff how to use and measure ingredients while cooking and serving. Once they "tune" the portion size they would be able to serve and work with portions "by the eye," but until then let them use scales and measuring cups!

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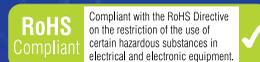
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RESTAURANT BUSINESS AND SPECIALIST/ ADVISER HELP

By S. Suchithra



The usual question asked was if it had been definitely worth the cash to rent an adviser. This is often an awfully difficult question and depends on the profile of the adviser, past record of serving to start-up restaurant businesses and therefore the fee they might charge. But here are some general guidelines you can use:

1. Consultants are more helpful for established businesses looking to fine-tune their business model/operational processes.
 2. For start-ups they are useful for creating theoretical business viability plans i.e. while you are still evaluating whether to invest or not.
 3. They can provide you some useful contacts - brokers, interior designers, kitchen equipment manufacturers etc. But you can find a lot of these nowadays quite easily though services like Justdial, meet with a few vendors and evaluate them.
 4. As a new restaurant business, if you are hiring a consultant, here are the kind of areas you will really need support and guidance on - so make sure if the consultant can deliver along these lines:
 - a) Refine your business concept to one that can make money for you. This will mean doing a reasonably accurate cost estimate/analysis with all the components involved.
 - b) Refining your product proposition very clearly - will the customer clearly understand what your USP is and will they be willing to pay what your business model wants them to pay? This will also include giving you very specific inputs on what to include in the menu and what not, how to price the products etc.
 5. Last thing is hiring a really good person (not a consultant) to create and run the businesses, even if you end up paying him more than market salary to him, offer an aggressive profit sharing mechanism and also offer some sweat equity. You will end up paying this individual almost the same as you would to a consultant, but this individual will be more interested in making your business successful than a consultant who has no stake in the business. Essentially think of the second level staff in good restaurants/hotels - e.g. not the Chef, but the F&B manager or the assistant chefs in a good restaurant in a hotel like Taj. Finding a really good person with whom you can build trust and business chemistry will not be easy - but will be worth the effort.
- c) At the location you have chosen, will you be able to realistically achieve the customer volumes that your business plan forecasts. i.e. will you be able to get say "100" customer walking in everyday, if that is what your business plan is built on.
 - d) Help with hiring staff across all levels - the chef, the kitchen staff, the stewards, delivery boys, washing staff, assistants etc. This is an area consultants may be very weak on.
 - e) Telling you how and what budget for marketing and identifying options where you can get the most result for the buck other than newspaper advertising.
 - f) Help you with licenses
 - g) Giving you MIS templates and teaching you how to measure and track the progress of your business.
 - f) Essentially you will need a consultant who can tell you what to do if he were investing his own money into the business.

AWARDS



Mr. Prabhakar Shetty of Prakruti Resorts receiving 'India's No. 1 Brand Awards 2016' for Best Resort at the hands of Shri Anna Hazare during the Brand Awards function held in Mumbai.



Dr. P.S. Hegde Senior Hotelier of Zone- X being felicitated during the 36th AHAR AGM.



BMW car on display during the 36th AHAR AGM.

Sales and Profitable Sales

By Bhaskar K Shetty

The reason why the food business looks very attractive to most people is the illusion of profitability and success when you visit a restaurant as a customer. Clearly a lot of the restaurants are very profitable and successful. The key measurements of the restaurant business are really 3 components - the Food Cost, the Overhead Costs, and the Gross Profits.

The Food Cost:

This is essentially the direct cost of the product you will be selling. One of the reasons the food business has historically been very profitable is that customers are willing to pay 3 to 4 times the cost of the product. So for a good restaurant business, you should target your food cost to be between 25% to 33% of the selling price.

The Overhead Costs:

This includes all non-food costs: the major ones being Rental of the premises, Staff salaries, Utilities (Gas, Electricity), Marketing expenses. For a good business, the target for the overhead costs would be around 33%.

The Gross Profits:

Total Revenues - Food Costs - Overhead Costs = Gross Profits. So the target for a really good business needs to be 33% of the Revenues.

In short Food Cost - 33 %

Overhead Costs - 33 %

Gross Profit - 33 %

The difference between successful restaurants and the others is their ability to generate profitable sales rather than just sales. Whenever most people start a restaurant the focus is so much on getting customers and generating sales that they do not price their product at a level that is required for the business to sustain itself and generate profits. The trouble is that after the initial round of sales, when you change your price, the customers disappear. In this business the price of the product is as important as the product itself. This is especially critical if your business is

a low cost/budget offering - as the market segment is exceptionally price sensitive there. With a high priced concept restaurant, you can still get away with increasing prices, if the concept is received well by customers. Now explain this a little better below using an example.

Let's say you open a specialty sandwich restaurant and start selling sandwiches. Now as far as a customer is concerned, he will have a price range in mind for a sandwich - Rs. 25 at a roadside vendor, Rs. 50-60 in a coffee shop (Cafe Coffee Day). Now you start selling sandwiches (exact similar to that of Coffee Day), at Rs. 40-50. In a Coffee Day like setting, you will get customers. The trouble is you will probably be offering customers a product that costs much more for you to make than what it does for Coffee Day - The cost of the ingredients will be more for you (you don't have the volumes to justify discounted prices), wastage will be much higher for you (especially when you start as you will have a tough time forecasting the number of customers and the last thing you want is to say "Not Available" to customers). So let's say the cost of the sandwich for Coffee Day is Rs. 20 and for you is just 4 bucks more - Rs. 24. Now to keep the food cost at 33%, Coffee Day will sell the sandwich at Rs. 60. You will have to sell the same sandwich at Rs. 72. So why

would customers come to your place? To make it attractive to customers, you offer your sandwiches with French fries. Now the cost of these 2 additions would be about Rs. 8-10 for you. So now, your price will need to be Rs. 100 (for you to keep the food cost at 33%). What practically will happen is that you will price the sandwich at Rs. 60 (same as coffee day) and offer these extra items to make it attractive for customers and get them to come in. Now your food cost is Rs. 32 and your selling price is Rs. 60. So your food cost is 53%. Your numbers go for a toss. So even if you start getting a lot of customers, your business metrics go for a toss. Even with large volumes, negotiated rates with suppliers etc., your food costs will not come down below 50% (simply because you are offering too much for too little). So now you will end up with a business that gets a lot of customers, generates revenues, but may actually be making an operating loss. So it is like running in a treadmill - you work hard and put in a lot of effort and energy to run, but you end up staying at the same place. After some time, you get tired, give up, and get off the treadmill. So you will end up shutting shop.

Basically unless your product design and pricing are carefully done to ensure that your business will be profitable, the effort will not be worthwhile.



How to rank among the topmost searches for restaurants

G. Subramanian

Consumers are relying on the Internet for every basic need, from laptops to Smartphones, they are using technology at its best. And, around 40 per cent of customers search for their favorite restaurants to dine at a nearby location either on their Smartphone or tablets. But how many restaurants are actually finding business from it is still unknown.

Boosting local search result is very crucial for a restaurant to come under their radar. According to my own findings and research it is very important to filter the basic information about restaurants- the kind of cuisine it is serving, concept, location and area to make your restaurant high on searches.

Here are four main pointers on getting yourself tech-friendly and searchable:

Get listed: Today there are many restaurant reservation and listing sites where you can list yourselves to get the best result. One can only list themselves on sites such as Yellow Pages, Bing, Zomato, and Tripadvisor to get an extend click of the varied customers. Also, try and put your location in the search engine to see where the page takes you.

Select the words carefully: Try and use the terms, words that you want your customers to relate with your restaurant, concept. Also, make sure the page titles, tags are rightly used to avoid over use of the same tags as this may lead to a customer base which might not be your interest of business.

Stay up to date: How often do you change your menu, when the photo shoot is last done, when the new menu is coming, are you planning a certain event??? Keep yourself first when it comes to getting the right kind of attention as you never know when your customer might search these of the tags. In a way it also helps get you better reviews and opinion on restaurant discovery sites and among the bloggers and journalists.

Search Yourself: After doing the above activities, try and search yourself using these keywords, you will get the answer. . Always try and push the best tags to make you restaurant noticed to everyone.

And, hence we can say that getting on everybody's tip is not an easy task, some basic parameters with smart actions are key to getting yourself attention.



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Five top reasons to avoid buying up a running restaurant

By S. Suchithra



For a newbie, it is advisable to avoid resale units. Here are the big reasons :

Point # 1: Ask yourself...why would anyone want to sell a restaurant that has been operational for any number of days? The most likely and usually is: there are not many takers for its food. This phenomenon is evident everywhere in India and especially in Mumbai. The financial hub India has its own generous spread of restaurants catering to almost every ethnic group indigenous group.

Though the new owner may plan to offer a whole new range of dishes on the menu, people may have unpleasant memories of the place and usually tend to shun it. Added to this can be the financial baggage of the previous owners and staff, labor union issues.

Point # 2: Dismantling the existing infrastructure of an operational restaurant- right from the sign board to the interior livery and kitchen and giving the premise a total facelift often proves to be a labor and cost intensive exercise. Added to this is the additional burden of undoing all the bad publicity the place may have generated under its previous owner due to poor service and unpalatable food, causing an additional expense on advertising the new place under the new owner. It is well known that old names continue to stick to the place regardless of how many times the premise has been re-named. And with its old identity follows the earlier notoriety.

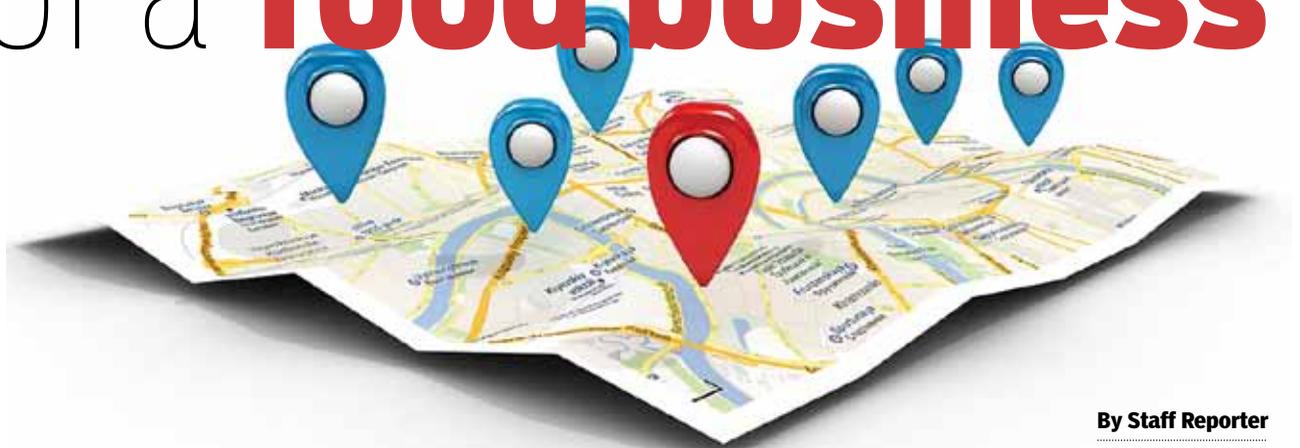
Point # 3: An old restaurant may be pretty easy to procure. It may not have failed for its poor service or food quality but simply because

it lacked customers due to the area and neighborhood where it is operating. Before embarking on the ambitious plans to introduce a new brand and menu at the place, it would be worth the effort to find out the other insidious causes for its failure: For example, the place may have been a den for nefarious activities or a hang-out for undesirable elements, used as vice den of sorts or may have been site of some major crime.

Point # 4: Some other reasons may also be the difficulty in procuring licenses for essentials such as electricity and water supply, objections by people living around the premises to a restaurant operating in such close proximity to their dwellings and unpopularity of the particular type of cuisine offered.

Point # 5: Ease of access counts as one of the main factors that will help decide whether your restaurant gets clients or not. With new found affluence, Mumbaikars now own one or more vehicles. Hence, you will need to ensure that your restaurant offers adequate and safe parking facilities for two and four wheelers. Safety is of prime concern since a client's vehicle should not be prone damage and vandalism of any sort. Many restaurants are now adding valet parking as a value addition for their customers. This facility is gaining popularity in India since it dispenses with the need for a diner to find suitable parking for his or her vehicle and walk it down to the restaurant with companions. Valet parking also signifies that the location where the vehicle is parked, is safe. Hence, those planning to buy existing restaurants will also need to ensure they have proper parking areas for their customers who can be assured their vehicle will not be towed away by traffic cops.

Picking up a franchise of a **food business**



By Staff Reporter

Is it worth investing on opening an outlet by franchising?

This is the question a large number of investors in the food business will soon have to ask themselves. One of the biggest drawbacks in opening a franchise outlet is...investors are expected to cough out about 10 percent of their revenues to the franchisor. And this fee has to be paid regardless of the place's profitability.

Those who wish to operate franchised outlets need to remember that they are not at liberty to hire and fire staff based on performance. These staff have to be trained by the franchisor prior to opening of the outlet and while recruiting any new service crew, to ensure consistency of service across all stores of the brand. The franchisee also loses the right to procure material- either edible or for service from the open market: The franchisor usually insists that all stuff used at the outlet should be sourced from them. This can make operations highly cost intensive. In addition, the franchisee has to pay a stiff royalty to the franchisor.

The franchisor always remains as the dominant force and the dormant owner. Should they so desire, they can take away the franchise rights as per the contract, if the franchisor indulges in the

slightest infarction or anything that may bring disrepute to the global brand- regardless of how trivial the nature. A franchise outlet will usually attract competition from a peer and the investor may find they are pitted against one or more formidable competitors offering a somewhat similar food and service offering. Cutting prices to overcome such competition proves counter productive due to the high operational costs already involved.

Further, franchised outlets are never evergreen, except in select markets in India. The Indian diner has taste buds honed fine by decades of local food and the novelty of tasting other cuisines dies down almost as soon as it was born, soon after the first few visits. The franchisee will thus be saddled with the additional burden of spending upon advertising and seeking newer and newer customers more frequently than a non-franchised outlet in the neighborhood which offers its own unique fare-possibly at much lower prices.

Investors can use their discretion and find whether they can offer a product and service that can compete with a franchised outlet. This can help them establish their own unique identity in the local market, operate at much lower costs, retain the right to procure whatever they deem fit instead of depending upon a franchisor, hire and train their own staff and carve a niche in the market.



New strategies will decide future of foreign chains in India

By G. Subramanian

The last few years have seen several global food brands enter India. While a few can aptly claim runaway success, others are battling myriad issues ranging from staffing challenges to non acceptance among its targeted clientele. While brands such as McDonald's have found the Indian market a literal cakewalk with wide acceptance among the Indian urbanites, newcomers like Wendy's were found to be mired with some teething problems.

Industry sources opined, foreign players in the food and beverage sector need to overcome four major challenges while hoping to get a slice of the Indian market. What makes the Indian clientele unique is, indigenous palates are more inclined to local flavors and tastes, thanks to the centuries old culinary tradition of India where myriad spices have honed local palettes.

Challenge-1: Determining the proper location for the outlet:

Despite the massive proliferation of vehicle ownership in India, citizens evidently do not relish the thought of venturing too far from their homes and offices for tantalizing their taste buds. Hence, entrants into the market are required to find locations that are easily accessible by both those with and without vehicles. It is difficult to even visualize an Indian family board a crowded public transport bus to commute from their home to a site for casual dining at a restaurant. Hence, it is vital for new entrants and those intending to consolidate their positions by adding new outlets to choose locations that are near densely populated, affluent neighborhoods, business and office districts and popular malls. Such locations come at a stiff price and new

entrants find it difficult to swallow the rates prevailing in such areas.

Challenge-2: Staffing:

Working as a restaurant crew is definitely not the dream for many an Indian youngster when it comes to choosing careers. Thanks to misplaced cultural idiosyncrasies restaurant jobs are generally rank at the lower most echelons of the preferred job list for prospective employees. Lucrative pay packages offered by foreign entrants, is gradually changing this perception. While some chains have successfully managed to hire, train and deploy qualified staff at every level of their operations, others are awaking to the blunders of hiring inexperienced and unqualified staff with minimal training.

Challenge-3: Dining experience:

Indian customers are given to expecting value for money and more. They expect value additions such as seamless service and that "preferred" customer treatment, which can be delivered only by a highly motivated crew at various levels of operations. And clients tend to verbalize their likes and dislikes rather eloquently. Entrants into the market will have to bear in mind the various vagaries of Indian mindset and empower their staff accordingly.

Challenge-4:

Niche branding and marketing: In US markets, dining at a large burger chain is common while in India continue to be associated with status and financial affluence. Operators have to ensure their brand does not appear too uppity to the customer with a moderate budget or too cheap that it competes with the neighborhood snack vendor.

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Know APC in your business

By Bhaskar K Shetty

“APC” is a term you will usually hear in the business. I don’t know whether APC remains for “Average Price per Customer” or basic “Average per Customer”, however the significance is the same - the amount of incomes would you be able to create from every client who strolls into your eatery. APC becomes important while arranging your eatery and the space you would need and how you anticipate that the client stream will be at your restaurant. This is entirely intricate to clarify in a single line as there are various factors that decide APC.

In simple terms, if you expect to generate revenues of Rs. 15,000 per day and have a 50 seater restaurant, your APC will probably have to be Rs. 150 (let’s assume 50 customers for lunch and dinner each). For a premium fine dining restaurant, the APC will be higher (Rs. 300 to Rs. 1000) and you can expect only one rotation of customers (i.e. each seat in the restaurant gets used only once during a lunch and dinner session). So if you plan to service 100 customers for lunch, you will need a 100 seater restaurant. For a budget restaurant, you can expect 2 rotations per session - i.e. each seat in the restaurant gets used by 2 different customers in each session.





Income Sources for a Restaurant

By G. Subramanian

Sources of income for a restaurant/food business are:

1) Walk-in Customers -

Unless you are a take-away/delivery only unit, this will probably be the biggest component of your revenue. You need to figure out a way to get repeat customers and referral customers

2) Take-away customers -

For reasonably priced/budget restaurants, this could be a reasonable revenue source. This will also depend on the product offering and how convenient you make it for your customers to pick up the food (easy parking for their vehicles - atleast for 2 wheelers, is a big criterion for good take-away joints)

3) Door Delivery Orders -

Customers in India expect most restaurants (even some of the fine dining ones) to offer door delivery services. Unfortunately, this one shows up less demanding to do, than it really is.

4) One Time Party/Bulk Catering Orders -

This is a very profitable source of revenue for most restaurants. From what I know, most profitable restaurants get a few party orders every month and this really boosts their profitability and helps them tide over lean days. Here quality of service and flexibility are key. If you can figure this one out and do a good job, it could generate significant repeat/referral orders.

5) Regular Meal Catering Orders -

This is one of those very attractive looking revenue sources that a lot of new restaurants try to get into, but in reality turns out to be worthless in most cases. Typically the pricing is so low for these orders that if you include the food cost, the effort for large orders, and the transportation, the numbers don't add up. This need to be managed as a separate business not linked to a restaurant for it to make business sense.

The anticipated changes which may happen in this source are

This business of preparing food in an external kitchen, transporting it to the office and setting up a food pick-up area everyday will vanish. The whole process is excessively wasteful, costly and cleanliness issues will turn out to be more obvious

Bigger Companies will move to a food court model, where they will offer space for outer brands to set up their units inside of organizations - possibly push them to offer lower costs, by financing rent, utility expenses.

Small companies will stop offering this facility and some of them may just offer a cash equivalent or food coupons, in lieu of arranging for a caterer to come in and serve food. Employees will need to use options available in the locality.

Manufacturing set-ups will continue running their canteens, where the food is prepared and served on-site by a contractor.

Companies which do not have enough space to house external brands, will carve a small pantry area for at least an on-site cafe/juice/snack stall, so employees can at least have some option on-site. Again, this will be contracted out.



By S. Suchithra

Restaurants offering Gujarati / Rajasthani Thali is more successful than other type of restaurants Why?

- Customer will have an idea of how much money they are going to spend in the restaurant and what exactly they will get at the restaurant. So if you have a good product offering, satisfying customers and generating repeat customers/referrals becomes easier.

- Because of such offerings, the customer is always feel satisfied at the end of the meal. Out of the various dishes, everyone will like a few items, here you will get unlimited servings of the items you like and of course you always have a couple of dessert options that will please the customer even if everything else was not that great. If customers leave your restaurant satisfied, it is really good for your business.

- Operationally it makes things a lot easier (This is a big one if you run/manage a restaurant)

1) There is no confusion with order taking and fulfillment. In a typical restaurant, communicating the orders to the kitchen, prioritising the food preparation, assembling the food for a table and serving the right order to the right table is quite a process - during busy times, the kitchen area is literally like a warzone.

2) Since the food is prepared in advance (i.e. the cooks don't start preparing the dish once the customer places the order), the customer gets the food quickly. No one really likes waiting for food in a restaurant - that is why even in a lot of fine dining restaurants, you will notice that they will serve complementary bread/nibbles immediately after the customer gets seated at the table to keep them happy till their order arrives. This is particularly critical during busy times, when your kitchen will invariably delay orders and frustrate your customers.

3) Billing once a customer has finished the meal is easier - no need to track specific orders for a specific table. This minimizes possibilities of errors, wrong billing, and scope for any hanky-panky by the cashier/restaurant staff.

4) Menu Planning and Cost Control: This is another big one for me.

- * Since you don't have a fixed menu, managing and controlling your inventory of raw material becomes easy.

- * Within your broad concept, your chef can play around with the specific menu options, make changes easily (based on customer feedback) and have more scope for innovating. Running Food festivals/thematic events is easier - e.g. Holi Special, Diwali Special etc.

- * Also with the way raw material costs have fluctuated over the last few years, a good chef can quickly remove high cost offerings and replace them with alternatives. e.g. If the cost of Capsicum goes up significantly, the chef need not buy Capsicum for that particular period, and instead prepare a brinjal dish that is aligned with the overall concept.

Hopefully I have convinced a few of you about this theory of mine.

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(I Shashikant Shetty, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief)



The Plastic carry bag ban and its impact on restaurants

By G. Subramanian

Restaurants with an active take-away and home delivery business will have to start using woven cloth-like bags. These cost almost the same as the plastic carry bags and all the packaging vendors have started stocking these. Through some research into these woven cloth-like bags I learnt that even these bags contain plastic. There are 2 variants of these bags - Virgin and Non-Virgin. The Non-virgin ones are the cheaper option and contain plastic. The virgin ones are made with cloth and are more expensive.

While any reduction in plastic is a welcome move, for real impact, the government needs to go to the heart of the plastic consumption zone - the FMCG companies. Guess that will have to wait for now.

Plastic & Aluminum Foil containers -

These are the containers in which the restaurants packed the food for takeaway/home delivery.

Pouches -

Plastic and Aluminum - These are the small thin plastic and silver foil pouches in which restaurants pack side dishes (sambar, chutney etc.), condiments etc. Several restaurants use these to pack the actual food too (e.g. Biryanis). All of these can no longer be used. This will probably be the biggest impact to restaurant and food businesses. The pouches are cheap, very convenient to pack and are leak proof when tied with a thread or rubber band. Plastic container alternatives to these are expensive (over Rs.2 per container) and are prone to leaks. There are thicker Aluminum foil pouches too available which can be used,

The Non-virgin ones are the cheaper option and contain plastic. The virgin ones are made with cloth and are more expensive.



but these again are expensive.

Cling wrap and Aluminum foil

Plastic cling wraps can no longer be used. Aluminum foil rolls can be used. Plastic cling wraps are the cheapest and easiest way to cover food containers. Without these, the cost of using Aluminum foil will be prohibitive. Every restaurant uses cling wraps extensively to store pre-cooked ingredients and pre-processed foods. These are used only in the kitchen so may not catch the attention of the officials when they come to inspect. But technically, usage of any of these will make business liable to pay fines and even have their licenses canceled for non-compliance.

The biggest pain will be felt by the street side food vendors and low cost food joints

who are extensively using the low cost pouches. For others, not being able to use cling wrap in the kitchen will be an operational problem. They will slowly have to get used to container with lids.



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SC clears decks for dance bars in Mumbai

The Supreme Court on Wednesday cleared the decks for the issuance of dance bar licences to hotels and restaurants...

...authorities shall issue the licences within ten days therefrom, said the bench of Justice Dipak Chandra Chaudhary and Justice Shiva Kirti Singh in their order.



in media

BMC to serve eviction shock to food stalls

The civic body will soon start packing off vendors who cater to Mumbai's ever-increasing appetite for freshly made street food...

SC Rules Out Live Feeds to Police

Closed-circuit TV cameras can be at the entrances, not in the performing area. The apex court hearing on Mumbai dance bars...

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Rent move may hit SoBo hotels too

Proponents of the rent control act may face opposition on account of misadventures. A large number of tenants will be affected...

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कारण साठीच महाग होणार? वीज महाग होणार? कारणांमुळे वीज महाग होणार...

Tenants of large, old flats face 200-times rent hike

Mumbai: Those wanting to start eateries, bar/liquor shops (permitted) and lodging rooms or build live concert venues in public places...

Liquor licence fee for big pvt parties hiked

Mumbai: The state excise department on Wednesday increased the one-day temporary liquor licence fee for private parties for over 300 people...

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Many Mumbaiers Take Off for Tourist Spots Or Stay Home. Eateries, bars' Dec 31 earnings halve in '15...

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'Regressive' curbs violate bar patrons' privacy

Bar patrons' privacy. 'Regressive' curbs violate bar patrons' privacy...

Jeering inspectors uninvited guests at unopened dance bars

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