



# AHAR

## Hospitality

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### Dear Esteemed Members,

Greetings.

Over the period of time AHAR is seen and heard in the media space on bigger and larger formats. This is due to the unified decision by the management to address Member's concern and the bottlenecks with ease.

The most coveted event of the year 'AHAR AGM & Hospitality Show' drew a huge turnout with bigger and corporate companies participating in the show is a great achievement.

We are striving hard to put together as much information as possible to make the Hotel & Restaurant industry get the maximum benefit. We are open for suggestions and recommendations for making the publication more interactive.

We look forward to the continuous support and patronage to make publication more useful and to keep it as a collectors issue.

**Wishing one and all a Happy & Prosperous New Year 2016**

Warm Regards

**S. Suchithra**

Send your feedback about our magazine at [info@forevernews.in](mailto:info@forevernews.in)

### Editor

Shri Shashikant Shetty

### Managing Editor

Shri Bhaskar K. Shetty

### Editorial Board

Adarsh Shetty

Sukesh Shetty

Vivek Nayak

### Published by :

Shri Shashikant Shetty

### On behalf of :

Indian Hotel & Restaurant Association (AHAR)  
B-2, Wadala Shiriram Industrial Estate, G. D. Ambedkar Marg, Wadala, Mumbai : 400 031.  
Tel.: +91-22-2417 1818 / +91-22-2417 3030

### E-mail :

[aharmumbai@gmail.com](mailto:aharmumbai@gmail.com)

**Website :** [www.ahar.in](http://www.ahar.in)

### Associate Publisher :

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## FOREVER NEWS

### Smt. S. Suchitra

Forevernews  
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Email: [info@forevernews.in](mailto:info@forevernews.in)

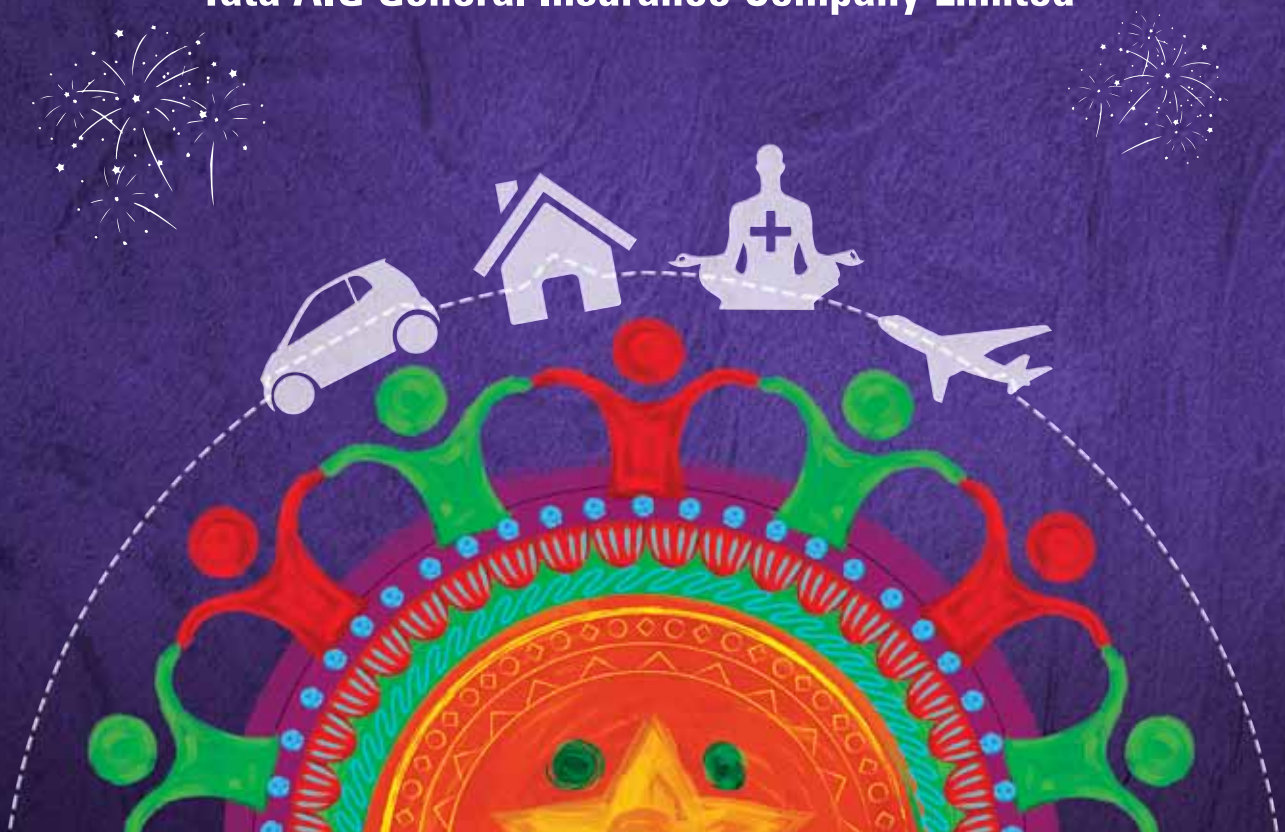


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**Dear Esteemed Members,**  
Greetings.

In the increasingly competitive world of dining, AHAR members jointly addressed many concerned area such as the ongoing stalemate in the recent Amendment to the Maharashtra Rent Control Act (Pagree). If implemented most of the SoBo Restaurateurs and Hoteliers' will have a herculean task in managing the day to day business due to the high rent.

In a bid to make the most of the boom in tourist traffic in the country, especially Mumbai being the financial capital, the Hospitality Industry leaders are in talk with various Govt. authorities for 'Ease of Doing Business Module' such as removing the obsolete, outdated and multiple laws which are a hindrance to the Restaurant Industry. Treating hospitality sector on par with other infrastructure sectors like

## From Managing Editor's Desk...

**The efforts for the past decade for repeal of various licenses has yielded result when the Govt. decided to abolish all the Police Licenses required for a Hotel / Restaurant / Club Houses / Lodging houses etc.**

ports, roads or airports, is on top of the agenda. The results of various court cases and counter cases and the timely joint efforts by AHAR members and other Associations across the State have resulted in favourable response from the decision makers.

The efforts for the past decade for repeal of various licenses has yielded result when the Govt. decided to abolish all the Police Licenses required for a Hotel /

Restaurant / Club Houses / Lodging houses etc. AHAR has also submitted a Memorandum to the Municipal commissioner, Mr. Ajoy Mehta for removal of certain obsolete licenses. We hope to get a positive response and relief very soon.

As a parent body to the Hospitality Industry AHAR has made a remarkable growth and visibility in the recently concluded AHAR AGM and the Hospitality Expo. This year too Shri Sudhakar T. Shetty, Chairman AGM Committee showed exemplary results by way of getting sponsors and the setting up of AGM activities. The benchmark contributions and achievements were praiseworthy. Like any other event the AHAR AGM as a ubiquitous event positioned as a coveted one and the team set a growing trend year on year. The participants are showing interest and look forward to future editions. We are happy to announce that advance booking has already taken place for the next year's AGM.

With the sudden economic downturn followed by multi

prong issues such as the skyrocketing prices of the essential commodities and the threat of terror attacks in Mumbai jolted us all out of our comfort zones. A time of crisis is also the best time to eschew an isolated business outlook in favour of a collaborative approach that focuses on the larger picture and deals with long-term and wide-ranging ramifications for all stakeholders. I believe that through a representation such as white paper, we would be able to trigger the much awaited process of a 'tourism renaissance' in India and emerge better and stronger than ever before!

While Mumbai will be witnessing various large scale events such as Make in India, Kala Ghoda Festival, Ballard Estate festival to name a few will be of greater opportunity for crowd pulling. This in turn will lead to a permanent clientele base.

**Wishing one and all a Happy & Prosperous New Year 2016**

**Bhaskar K Shetty**  
Managing Editor  
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### Dear Members,

A Meeting of All Hotel Associations was convened at Bunts Sangha Annex on 10.10.2015 to bring them all under one platform to understand their grievances, views, opinions about Hotel Industry and address them collectively. It was a huge success with more than 27 Hotel Associations throughout the State participating in the meeting. Shri Bharat Malkhani, President FHRAI. The entire participating delegates assured their full support to AHAR in all its decision to safeguard the interest of the Hospitality Industry.

The Hotel City Kinara Incident was very sad. We can understand the pain and agony of the parents who lost their near and dear ones. This incident has resulted in overstepping of authority by the Police and

## From the President's desk

**The Hotel City Kinara Incident was very sad. We can understand the pain and agony of the parents who lost their near and dear ones. This incident has resulted in overstepping of authority by the Police and MCGM officials and harassing even the legally run hotels / restaurants.**

MCGM officials and harassing even the legally run hotels / restaurants. We have approached our Honorable Chief Minister in this regard, who directed the Municipal

Commissioner to meet our delegation. We met the Municipal Commissioner and convinced him of the harassment by MCGM officials to the legally run Hotels / Restaurants. He agreed to take action against such erring officials and instructed his officials to be prudent and use their authority judiciously. A circular was issued simplifying the norms and procedure for obtaining the NOC from Fire Brigade. I request all the members to ensure that their Restaurants are Fire Compliant as per the latest circular issued by the Fire department and conduct periodic fire safety audits so that the incident like City Kinara would never reoccur.

Our 36th AGM held on 16.12.2015 in Bunts Sangha was a huge success with participation of 60 vendors which were booked in advance. The Seminar on Fire Safety norms by senior Fire Officials was appreciated by the huge

participants. The AGM was well attended with full quorum and the members were briefed with the activities of AHAR throughout the year and the roadmap ahead through PPT presentation. I personally thank Shri Sudhakar T Shetty, Chairman, AGM Committee and his team, who were responsible for this splendid show and the members for their excellent support. I seek support of each and every member in making this event a Mega One.

As an Association concerned with the Farmers' Suicide, Drought etc., it was unanimously decided to present a purse as our Donation to this noble cause through our internal donations and Corpus Fund.

**Wishing you all a Very happy, healthy and Prosperous NEW YEAR 2016.**

**Adarsh Shetty**  
President  
adarshshetty69@gmail.com



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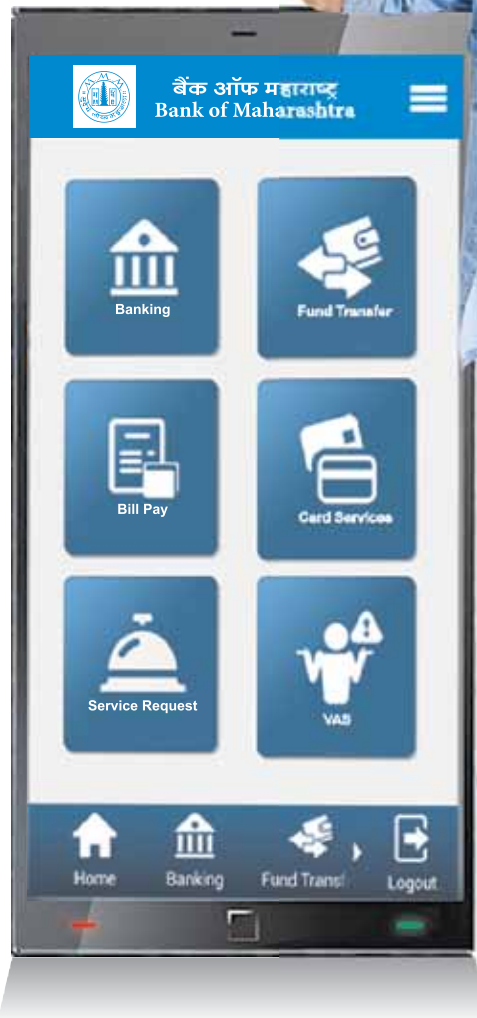
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**Dear Members,**

The last quarter of the year was a hectic one which mainly evolved around the unfortunate incident of Fire in a Hotel at Suburbs and its repercussions on other hoteliers in Mumbai. We had to put all our efforts to stop the blatant raids, breaking of the hotel premises inspite of being legal. The simplification of Fire Safety norms and obtaining the Fire NOC from the Fire brigade is an achievement due to our efforts. All members who do not possess or misplaced the Fire NOC issued earlier are advised to apply as soon as possible to avoid future complications and

## From Hon. Gen. Secretary's Desk

**We have appointed M/s 'Investaac' as our exclusively insurance brokers on record and request all members to avail the attractive insurance schemes offered by them.**

harassments.

We are still awaiting the clarification from the Licensing Department regarding the Sign Board license matter. We have also written to the Urban Development Department for inclusion of Association representation in the Town and Ward Vending Committee before finalizing any policy

regards hawkers under right to earn and living.

We have appointed M/s 'Investaac' as our exclusively insurance brokers on record and request all members to avail the attractive insurance schemes offered by them.

We thank all the Sponsors of the AGM and also the Vendors for their stall support in making the 36th AGM a Mega Event. We request the members to support the products of these sponsors and also the vendors participating in our monthly meetings so that they can patronize us in our future endeavors.

It would not be out of place to mention here that I have been privileged and fortunate enough to work as Hon. Gen. Secretary of our esteemed organization under four different Presidents. I have enjoyed working as Hon. Gen. Secretary each and every

moment as the spontaneous response which I needed to address from the members as well from competent authorities are quite challenging in nature. While I talk about the experience with the Advisors, the guiding light and learning curve which I have acquired from these veterans will be worth preserving and cherished forever. This experience would not have experienced if I would not have been opted as Hon. Gen. Secretary. How can I forget the members who have always been my strength and motivation in all my endeavours.

I wish you all a bright and peaceful NEW YEAR 2016.

**Sukesh Shetty**

Hon. Gen. Secretary  
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# Reinventing Regional cuisine

**Indian cuisine has to be more advertised and displayed so that people start understanding what Indian food is.**

By S. Suchithra



Earlier in 2015, it was expected that modern Indian cuisine will rise with passing time, later this year, what we are seeing is that chefs are working on locally sourced ingredients and are trying to introduce the regional and the authentic cuisine to the global masses.

Indian food industry has a successful history when compared to other parts of the world. From discovering its regional menus and cuisines which comprises more than a thousand recipes from each region and the inclusion of changes with each demography to adoption and acceptance of global cuisine, which India has adapted to be in tune with the global trends.

Regional cuisines need to be promoted because till now food in India is seen as the typical Punjabi food which has dominated the Indian food menus. Everybody in India and outside India thinks that it is the only Indian cuisine, but that is not true. We have different types of foods which are delicious. There is a vast range of food from Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Bengal, Gujarat, and Kashmir, but people don't know about it. So, this is the reason chef want to promote regional food and regional cuisine.

Meanwhile, experts also believe that today, Indians are much more attracted to the foods which are well advertised because they are no more restricted to eating

out but they want to know what all things have been used in designing the menu. And they want to consume a healthy or a balanced product without affecting their health.

Indian cuisine has to be more advertised and displayed so that people start understanding what Indian food is. Besides, it has got a huge variety of cuisines and everybody has to learn a lot from regions.

Today, it is very important to involve the senses and deliver new experiences to people. You need to take them out of restaurants to understand the culture and cuisine of this country. Chefs want to promote the cuisines which were cooked by our great

grandmothers in home. Thus, we can say that Indian cuisine has its own charm despite global cuisine entering the Indian F&B race. And Indian cuisine is here to stay for long.

Out of the regional cuisine the South Indian cuisine is known today for its light, low calorie and tempting dishes. The cuisine is famous for dosas, vadas, idlis and uttapams with Sambhar- the usual combination of these items. The South Indian dishes consist of sambhar, rasam, vegetable curry and pachadi (yogurt). It is a food that most people have had before and enjoy; the taste is authentic and has a home feel to it. This is what keeps customers asking for more.

## Rise of the South Indian Cuisine

South Indian cuisine consists of the cuisine of four states i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The four states in South Indian are totally unique in their own ways- Andhra, its cuisine is known for red chilly hotness in most of its food. Kannadigas are milder and prefers a konkan flavour, the keralites love their coconut flavoured curries and the Tamilians love a mix of spicy veg and non veg dishes finishing it off by curd rice.

Andhra Pradesh is known for its Hyderabad cuisine which is greatly inspired by the

Mughlai cuisine. Kerala culture has also contributed a lot in the south India cuisine; Appam and stew, ulli theeyal and banana chips are the common ones. The Chettinad cuisine of Tamil Nadu has a worldwide following cross the boundaries. Generally the dishes are hot and pungent with fresh ground masalas and the typical menu resembles the aristocratic way of the Chettinad people. This cuisine has lot of benefits and flavours; it is spicy, aromatic and zesty cuisine. Even the spices which are used are not from red chilli

Rice is main ingredient in all the South foods, for instance lemon rice, coconut rice, carrot rice and fried rice made by using coconut, curry leaves, urad dal, tamarind, pea-

nuts, chilies and fenugreek seeds. South Indian chutneys are also liked by people. The main ingredients for preparing these chutneys are coconut, peanuts, dal, tamarind, fenugreek seeds and fresh coriander leaves.

## The difference in North Indian and South Indian cuisine

The major difference is between North and South Indian food as the latter is totally opposite to former. The cuisine of South India is hotter than the North Indian cuisine. South Indians do not use of Garam Masala or any other dried spices but, turmeric, black pepper and cardamom are exceptions.

**South Indian dishes are not just delicious but also very easily digestible**

South India cuisine is a perfect blend of flavour, colour and taste and also takes care of the nutritional balance. Even, the visual appeal of the South Indian dishes is quite appealing from North Indian food. In beverages, coconut water, coffee is popular in South India. South Indians like to have coffee after having their meals.

While North India cuisine is broadly characterized by meats and vegetables cooked in the tandoor i.e. coal fired barbe-

cue, use of cream in dals and yogurt in marinades. Whereas South India food is characterized by dishes cooked on the griddle such as dosas, thin broth like dals called sambar and an array of seafood.

South Indian dishes are not just delicious but also very easily digestible as the South Indians do not use much oil in cooking their meals. So, "It's a good 'healthy' differentiator, liked across the country and can be served at great value. In addition to this, it is easily digestible and light on the stomach. South Indian food is healthy and gluten free unlike other Indian cuisine. But at the same time it is said that it is good for breakfast.

So what is awaiting us this year is totally amazing, as experts and experienced chefs in the industry are working on 'Bringing back the Regional Indian Cuisine' in its original form.



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# How to get more benefit during the Festive Season?

By S. Suchithra

Now a days people do not visit restaurants to show their excitement over the fancy decoration you do, but to enjoy the ambiance and scrumptious food. Gone are the days when only decorating your restaurant with colourful LEDs and lanterns to attract customers during the festive season was an amazing marketing scheme.

Restaurant marketing has come a long way from all that jazz. Restaurants have started gearing up with new ways to market themselves. While traditional marketing strategies have always helped restaurants attract more customers, the result could have been better with an improved marketing plan.

You might be already using the following vehicles to market your restaurant, here are some ideas to improve your engagement with diners -

- Website: Make it mobile friendly. Have an online menu and take online orders as well as reservations.
- Blog: Have an effective content marketing strategy. Start small with one blog post at a time. It all adds up.
- Print media: Give ads in newspapers and magazines. Distribute brochures and business cards. You must be doing this already :)
- Broadcast advertising: Some can even opt for ads on radio and TV. Try barter deals.
- Social media: Find platforms that work best for you. Be socially active and try paid social media ads.
- Email marketing: Sending informative emails with effective CTAs. Do you have a list of loyal customers? Customer database building is most neglected yet most important exercise. Start making it fast.
- Pay-per-click: Make Google AdWords your favourite vehicle for promoting your restaurant. Every business or industry should use the above mentioned vehicles to market their respective ventures.

However, what about those extra efforts that you should be putting in order to make it big during the festive season? With more and more people turning to restaurants for their lavish lunch and dinner celebrations, especially on festivals, there is a lot more potential for restaurants to reap huge rewards. Giving away gift vouchers, heavy discounts and other offers is not sufficient. You need to break the ice and try something different. So, get above the usual 'avail up to 30% on your total bill this Diwali...' and 'participate in our online contest to win exciting gifts', and rather:

## 1. Organize special events in the restaurant during the festival week

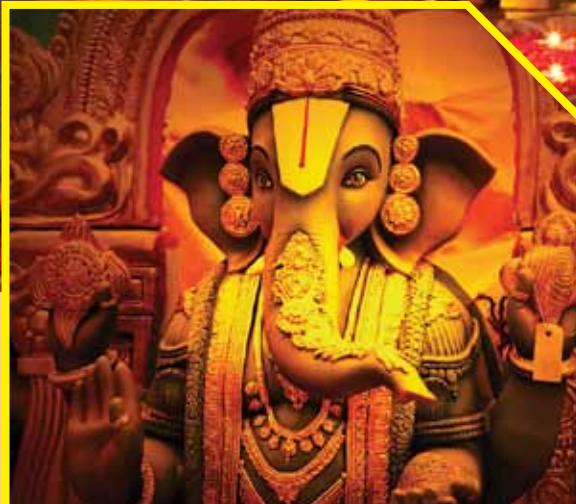
Karaoke nights, ghazal nights and costume parties at restaurants and clubs are a success among people. Organizing similar special events in your restaurant during the entire festival week will pull more crowd. Have a folk dance performance or stand-up comedians entertaining the customers.

## 2. Conduct a food festival that showcases the dishes relished during that particular festival

People love to be a part of food festivals. Come up with the best of your chefs and their classic festive dishes that interest customers. Try to tickle their taste buds by giving the traditional food items and sweets a contemporary twist. The essential elements of your dish being its looks, taste and smell, you cannot compromise on them when trying to be creative.

## 3. Have festival theme buffets

Buffet breakfasts, brunches, lunches and dinners are becoming popular as people prefer spending quality time with their friends, family and colleagues at restaurants relishing a variety of food items from the menu. So, why not incorporate this strategy in your restaurant marketing plan during the festive season? Have theme buffets that represent the culture and rituals followed during the festival. For example: a Diwali buffet dinner can comprise of food items and sweets made during the festival. Decorate the restaurant with floating candles, LEDs, lanterns. Use artificial crackers as décor items and props.



#### 4. Get behind the wheel

The concept of food trucks has not completely taken over the current time. There are still issues faced when it comes to getting licenses and fulfilling other legal formalities involved in starting a food truck. However, you can get behind the wheel during the festive season as a part of your promotional activity for a day or two. Getting permissions for that can be comparatively easier. Have fancy decorations on the food truck depending on the festival and theme.

These restaurant marketing strategies for the festive season cannot be a flop as more and more people today are attracted towards such quirky activities and concepts. And, good food is an add-on. The benefits of these could be goodwill, more loyal customers that leads to increased recommendations and thereby more ROI. So start planning for an upcoming festival well in advance.

#### 5. Start a customer engagement program

Start this Diwali with a contemporary way to listen to your diners in real time. Surprise them when they get a 'Thank You' or 'Sorry' message with their personalised names as soon as they submit a feedback after their dinner. Delight them with a quick call or message post dinner having a real conversation based on the comments they would leave with their reviews. Bring the 'Happy' customers back with automated marketing and learn more about your customers in an easy and seamless manner. One can make use of many tools available in the market.

Courtesy: <http://mobikontech.com/blog/>





# 36th AGM OF AHAR



## 36th Indian Hotel and Restaurant Association (AHAR) AGM & Hospitality Expo an ubiquitous event

Mumbai: It was a wow moment right in the morning to see a huge crowd of business visitors and AHAR members gathered for the inaugural function which was witnessed by who's who of the industry. The chief guests for the event was Shri Sudhir Shetty, CMD Charisma Builders Ltd., Grand Central Hotels & Shri Ravindra Arasa, Owner Rajhans Hotel, Chembur alongwith President Shri Adarsh Shetty, Hon. Gen. Secretary Shri Sukesh Shetty, Advisors, senior members and other delegates

from fellow associations.

Post inauguration the chief guest and team visited the exhibition stalls and was highly impressed by the way the exhibitors participated. Further the chiefs guests were felicitated with floral bouquets.

The seminar on Fire Safety was addressed by Shri V.M. Naik - Fire Advisor and Shri Harish Shetty - Asst. Div. Fire Officer. During the seminar many facts and figures were discussed and the recent fire mishaps and the way to prevent through a proper fire audit. During the seminar a video presentation highlighted the use of Gas leakage detector. The event concluded with the felicitation of the speakers.

As per the scheduled time the AGM started with the lighting of lamp by the Advisors and

Senior Members. AHAR President Shri Adarsh Shetty addressed the august gathering of esteemed AHAR members, trade body representatives, industry veterans, business partners, members from Other Hotel and Restaurant governing bodies from all over Maharashtra and members from the media during the 36th AGM held at Buntara Bhavan, Chunabatti, Kurla (E) on 16th December 2015. During the Presidential address he had touched upon all the areas of operation and the work done so far and the future road map for AHAR through an Audio visual and power point presentation.

Confirmation of the minutes of the 35th AGM and Accounts for the year was passed and the same was confirmed.



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Shri Narayan B Shetty Niranjan Hotel Kurla and Hotel Vishwa Bharat Ghatkopar



Shri Nilaya N Shetty Pooja Bar & Restaurant Bhiwandiwala Building Datta Ram Lad Marg Kalachowki



Shri Suryakanth G Desai Hanuman Bar & Restaurant Bhandup



Shri Vishwanath M Shetty Vijay Palace Rest & Bar Opp Bangur Nagar Link and M G Road Junction Goregaon West



Smt Devikumari S Shetty Arpan Bar & Restaurant Vikhroli



First Lady declaring the luck dip winner



Shri Manohar G Shetty Govindas Shree Durga Bhavan  
155 Ramchandra Bhatt Marg



Shri Mohan M Naganlla Swarupa Bar & Restaurant Chembur



Shri Raghunandan Kamath Kamaths Ourtimes Ice Creams Pvt Ltd  
Natural Ice Cream



Shri Sulliya Mohammed Hanif Miyaji National Restaurant  
Shashid Bhagat Singh Road



Shri Waman Balgi Balgi Hotel Carnac Bunder



ShriGopal Molyi Prakashanand Bar & Restaurant  
Naigaum Cross Road Dadar East



MR. CHANDRASHEKAR & SATWIKAS SHETTY COMPERING THE EVENT



Shri Sudhakar T. Shetty, Chairman AGM Committee been felicitated along with other team members

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AHAR FELICITATES SHRI BRIJESH SHANKAR SHETTY



AHAR team inspecting Audi car

# Gathering at AGM



## HEALTH & EYE CHECK UP, AN AHAR CSR INITIATIVE



# Make your first time customers to a regular one



By **Bhaskar K Shetty**

## Introducing happy hours to invite customers

Loyalty programs and rewards are good tools to make your first-timer, a regular customer at your restaurant. Here's how you can start.

Displaying offers on your menu: Discount offers on certain cuisines will attract people. This can make them come to you again. This can be in the following ways; you can introduce discount coupons, advantage plus coupons along with a membership card. Another offer is purchase one dozen of selective food item and receive a gold membership card with throughout the year he can purchase the same food item free of cost. Like that you can introduce silver and bronze card with time limit of enjoying the free food items for six and three months respectively.

Provide discount on cash payment of bill: Offer 10 – 15 % of discount on cash payment

can also pull in customers. It is essential to creatively design loyalty programs that can captivate your customer. You can also give discount on bill if the customer is paying through credit/debit card of selective bank.

Introducing happy hours to invite customers. Introduce Vodafone Monday, Samsung Tuesday etc. on a regular basis.

Touch a chord: You could also purchase loyalty program software. The software will track the frequency of customers' visits, their birthdays and what they like to buy from you. You can use this information to find ways to encourage the most profitable behaviour changes. For example if you find that your customer orders an appetizer with meal, you can give him one as free against five appetizers. If they enjoy it, they will recommend your restaurant to others.



## GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA

By Speed Post

**Very Important/ Urgent**

No. MIS - 1215/File-2/desk-5  
Home Dept., Camp Office,  
Hyderabad House, Nagpur,  
Date: 22 Dec, 2015.

To,

**All Commissioners of Police & All District Collectors,**

**Sub:** Regarding Permissions required for starting Hotel & Hospitality businesses.

Sir,

As per section 33 of Bombay Police Act, 1951, Police Commissioners, Dist. Collectors and Superintendent of Police are empowered to formulate Rules with respect to the stated subject therein.

2. Under the chairmanship of Honorable Chief Minister of Government of Maharashtra a meeting was held on 18/9/2015 on the subject of 'ease of doing business' & it was decided in the meeting that Rules framed for issuing below stated Licenses for Hotel & Hospitality Industry under Bombay Police Act Rules & Regulations were outdated & unnecessary & hence a decision was taken to cancel the following licenses.

1. Eating House Registration Certificate.
2. Swimming Pool License.
3. Place of Public Entertainment License (PPEL -A).
4. Place of Public Entertainment License (PPEL - B) Lodging License.
5. Performance License.

3. With respect to all the above stated subjects the rules have been framed as per Section 33 of Bombay Police Act by the concerned Police Commissioners & District Collectors with respect to their administrative jurisdictions with the prior approval of the Govt. and have been notified. Therefore if action is to be taken; then it is expected to be taken at their level.

4. With respect to the above it is informed that with a view to immediately implement the decisions taken in the meeting held under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Chief Minister; action at your end be taken immediately with respect to subject of cancellation/ repeal of rules stated at serial No. 1 to 4 of Para 2 above; falling under your jurisdictions.

5. As an appeal is pending before Hon'ble Supreme Court with respect to subject of dance bar; therefore Performance License in Serial No. 5 of Para 2 all other terms be deleted and only limited improvements be incorporated for issuing Dance Bar Licenses.

It is therefore requested that necessary action be taken to immediately implement; the above said order and compliance Report be submitted to Government within a week.

Yours

Sd/-

(P. H. Wagade)

Jt. Secretary. Home Dept.

Copy -Sent for information and for necessary action.

Director General of Police, Maharashtra State,  
Camp office. Nagpur.

# Restaurant & twitter

## What is twitter? And how it works for you?

Twitter is a communication platform that enables its users to send and read text-based messages of up to 140 characters, known as tweets. It now has more than 500 million users worldwide. You can use it to quickly share information with people interested in your restaurant, gather real-time feedback and build relationships with customers. When you combine messages that are quick to write, easy to read, public, controlled by the recipient and exchangeable anywhere, you've got a powerful way to communicate with your customers.

To listen in on the conversations happening right now, search Twitter for the name of your restaurant. If you have a Twitter account already, your home page has a handy search box on the right side.

You can also go to <https://twitter.com/#!/search-home>. And you can click here for a quick intro to Twitter Lingo.

Updates in real time are probably the most important new tool in the hospitality industry. For instance, at weekends restaurants have a long wait for reservations, but there are also cancellations. If you start a regular tweet every day at 3:00 p. m. that gives followers first crack at that night's late openings. It will become hugely popular. Being able to reach thousands of fans at 3:00, 5:00 or even 8:00 p.m. to tell them that there is an available reservation for four at 10:00 will accomplish something else. First, obviously, it fills a vacant table in that time slot. What it also does, though, is much more subtle and actually more important in the brave new world of social media marketing. It establishes an immediate dialogue between the restaurant and its patrons, encouraging brand loyalty and identification. It can also bridge the perceptual gap

that can make many restaurants seem out of reach for regular diners. Upscale should never equal inaccessible.

Don't forget photos! The importance of visuals in deploying social media tools cannot be overstated. Descriptions of ingredients and preparations are important, but nothing compares to an actual photo of a skillfully executed dish. Keep a camera handy to the kitchen and, when possible, assign a specific staff member the responsibility of taking pictures of specials, menu additions and desserts. This can also include wine additions or special cocktails. A relatively simple digital camera (Canon Sureshot is a good example) will possess an automatic macro feature that is idea for photographing food. It is even better if you can schedule it for the same time every week so it becomes a part of a regular work routine.

Other potential sources for tweets are short updates on menu items, your wine program, special cocktails and events.

By Bhaskar K Shetty

Never simply use the platform for the repetitive trumpeting of your menu. Remember, Twitter, like Facebook, is a very competitive arena. You want to make sure that you also provide information of value to your followers. Links to articles about your purveyors, recipes from your chef or information about vineyards are just a few examples of interesting content that will not only engage your audience, but also encourage them to re-tweet your posts to their friends.

Part of the Twitter experience is developing your relationship with your patrons, which is not only valuable now, but may be even more important in the future as these platforms evolve. Always encourage dialogue—ask questions whenever appropriate and answer replies and direct messages. And, of

course, any instant messages promoting immediate calls to action should always include a link to the Facebook page and the phone number of the restaurant. A very effective way to simply reference tweets on similar subjects, as well as index your own so they can be easily found, is the use of hashtags. You can find out all about them here.

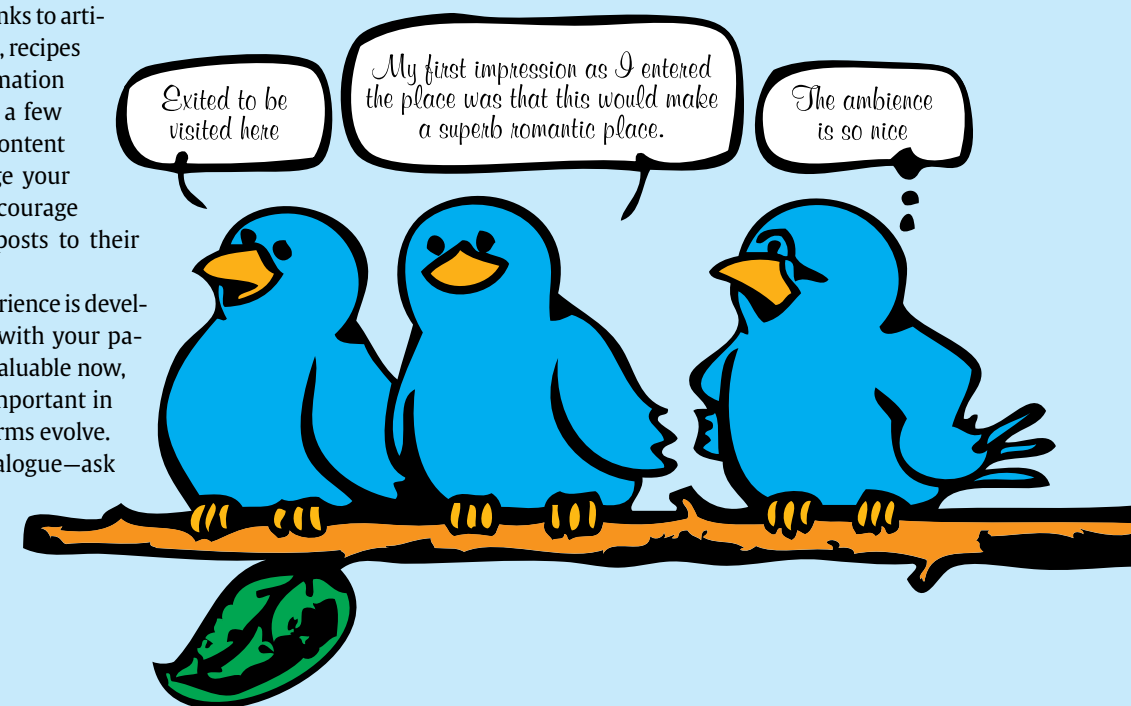
Understand the rules of engagement. Not all of the feedback you get on Twitter is going to be positive. People will have complaints, both real and imagined, and they will be only too happy to share them with the world. Monitoring tweets that reference your restaurant will keep you informed as to what people are saying about you. While it's good manners to thank someone for a complimentary post, you really don't want to get into a long public discussion about what may or may not be a legitimate complaint about their experience at your restaurant. You also don't want to just ignore them. I have found that the best policy is to answer their post with a simple "We're sorry you didn't enjoy your visit with us. Please contact us at

this email address—we will be in contact within the next 24 hours so we can address the issue directly." And then make sure to follow through.

Finally, the list of third-party Twitter apps can be somewhat exhaustive, but the one we've found to be most effective in managing multiple accounts is Hoot Suite. It supplies a number of metrics to track the effectiveness of your tweets and it also supplies handy tools for URL shortening, picture upload and document attachment.

Twitter has evolved into an essential tool for communicating with your customers in real time. It is an informal means of communication that may seem less than serious at times, yet it has also helped inspire revolutions. But, besides everything else, it is increasingly, inevitably, becoming the voice of your restaurant.

(Courtesy John Moore founder of [SocialMediaRestaurant.com](http://SocialMediaRestaurant.com))



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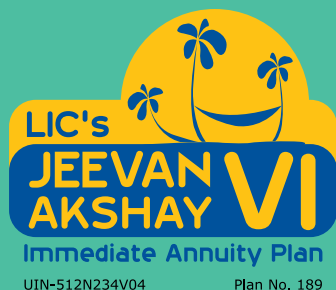
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