

Quick Campaign Ideas to Spur Your Marketing

Smaller efforts can help engage customers more frequently

It's a busy time of year, with a number of events and holidays approaching — Memorial Day, Father's Day, graduations, Fourth of July, and summer itself. But you don't need a significant event like a holiday to plan a smaller campaign to get consumers to visit your restaurant or to just say, "Thank you."

To ensure we're on the same page, we're defining a "campaign" as a specific mix of communications that will help you reach a marketing goal. A campaign is not necessarily a single email that's going out on a specific day. It could be a series of emails going out, along with social media posts that are designed to drive customers to take action. It could even include a physical event such as a wine tasting, fundraising dinner, or new-menu unveiling day.

In an effort to spur your campaign planning, here are seven ideas to get you started:

Invite customers to a special event at your location.

If you want customers to come to your restaurant, give them a reason to drop in by hosting an event. Every few months, you could host a pairing event where you partner with a winemaker to pair specific wines with various meal courses. Customers get a chance to try different varietals and ask the winemaker questions about the various blends and flavors. Such an event is a great way to get customers in the door to experience your food while learning about great new wines.

Introduce a new product or service.

Apple is well known for keeping secret exactly what it's announcing until the second it's unveiled. You're a

restaurant, not a tech company like Apple; tell people about your latest menu offerings or specialties. Or, maybe those on your email list can get the news first, before those connected with you on social media hear about it.

Know your current events.

Is there something happening in your town that impacts your customers and/or your business, such as a parade, fair, ballgame, or another big happening? Chime in by sharing links to related information, along with your opinion or supportive message. Ask your customers to get involved by starting a dialogue and soliciting their comments. And don't forget to invite those attending to stop by for a drink or a bite to eat!



Information is always appreciated.

You're the expert, so share some of that expertise with your customers and clients without always asking for a sale. For instance, share the recipe for one of your dishes or tips on how to prepare certain foods. This is helpful advice for customers who like to do a little cooking of their own. And when they don't feel like cooking or want someone else to take care of the dishes, where are they going to go? To your restaurant, of course.

Say thanks.

When was the last time you told your customers how much you appreciate their patronage? Send an email that says simply, "Thank you for being a customer." You could even add in a special, unusual offer. Or, if you've recently made some changes to your establishment as a result of customer feedback, share those changes and say the reason you're making them is a direct result of their input.

Share insight with another business owner.

Who says you always have to talk with customers? Reach out to another small business owner in your

community and talk about what has worked for both of you. Perhaps you'll gain some insight. Or, maybe you'll find that this interaction will lead to a future opportunity to cross promote and drive business for each other.

Share videos.

[Video is a great way to engage](#) with your customers and members. Why not create a campaign around a new set of videos you've created? They could be casual messages from you or your employees, customer testimonials about your delicious meals, or quick demonstrations about how to prepare a dish. People love to watch video, so give them something to view.

The goal of this type of quick campaign planning is to remove the fear of planning for an entire year or around specific events or holidays. By breaking your marketing efforts into smaller tasks, you can be more nimble and can engage your customers on a more frequent basis.

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