

## Communication Recipes: Vary to Taste

### Getting the word out through multiple channels is key to success

A recent study by [Microsoft](#) and [MarketTools](#) on how people (adults in particular) are using the smorgasbord of communication tools at their disposal shows that [email](#) and [social media](#) usage are both up year-over-year, 45% and 21% respectively. As marketers, this means you have more ways than ever to reach out to customers, but finding the right mix of tools (email, Facebook, Twitter, et al) can be a bit of a challenge.

Think of your communications mix like cooking. Different recipes (such as cookies or cupcakes) may call for the same ingredients (eggs, flour, sugar), but it's the amount and way each ingredient is used that changes depending on what's being baked. Similarly, on some occasions, email might be the main form of communication, while social media is only lightly sprinkled into the mix. In other cases, the two "ingredients" may be evenly divided in the "recipe."

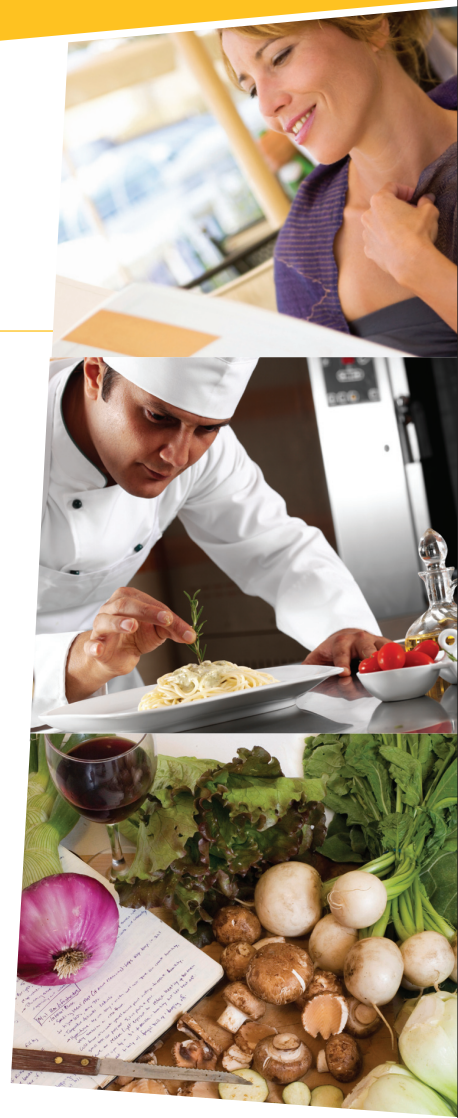
Here are a few different examples of communication recipes that might serve as a guide for your establishment:

### New menu items

If you're a business getting ready to roll out a new item, or an entire new seasonal menu, providing a little preview to only those on your email list is a great way to build buzz for the launch. It gives your loyal customers a feeling of being "insiders." Social media can be used to tease the upcoming launch and drive those interested in learning more to sign up for your email list so they can get the preview. Once the item or menu is available, post pictures, specification information, and links on your Facebook Page and/or Twitter feed to let the public know your latest offering is here and ready for ordering. Including a coupon or special incentive to engage is a great idea as well.

### Touting expertise

You know how to prepare and serve food better than anyone, so why not share some of your expertise with customers and fans on social media? For instance, during a rainy week, you can suggest great comfort food dishes. Perhaps your fans are hosting their own dinner parties. What are the essentials they should serve? You don't even have to always share your own thoughts; link to articles and resources written by others. Similarly, a monthly email newsletter to diners could offer a roundup of tips along with a coupon for a future meal to spur business. After all, it's one thing to try cooking a gourmet meal by yourself, but it's quite another to have one served to you the right way,



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and without all the work. Providing such information on a regular basis through multiple channels will bring your business to mind when those looking for a good meal are wondering where to go. With both channels, think of your content as a way to position you and your business as the “go to” expert.

### Promoting events

Do you host events? For those that are open to the public — where the goal is to get as many attendees as possible — email and social media play well together in getting the word out, generating pre-event buzz, and keeping attendees informed of any changes to the event. For instance, you can offer your email list subscribers first crack at tickets, making a subscription more of an “exclusive” offer. Once the early-bird

deadline passes, Facebook and Twitter can be used to attract members of the public not already on the list. And, as the event approaches, those on the attendee list can be emailed with last-minute details, while the buzz-building continues through snippets of what’s to come posted on Facebook. Both Facebook and LinkedIn allow you to post your events and can attract customers you don’t already engage with elsewhere.

When it comes to marketing your restaurant, you know your customers’ tastes. It’s good to remember that email is just one ingredient, and social media is another. It’s how you use them together that’s going to ultimately determine if your target audience will gobble up your messages.

For more email marketing insights or to sign up for a free trial account, visit <http://sysco.constantcontact.com>.

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