



Quality Marketing Solutions

Local Marketing Services

The Restaurant Survival Guide

Following Presidents Ramaposa's announcement on Monday 23rd March, we are in the middle of a nationwide lockdown. The lockdown is vital to flatten the curve of the COVID19 Coronavirus.

This is an incredibly difficult time for all restaurant owners, and I'm sure that you are similar to other restaurant owners in that you are struggling with the decision on what to do next.

But for you, in your restaurant, **once the restrictions start to ease**, you actually have an opportunity available to you that if you can take advantage of it in the right way, it can help you to not only weather the storm, but also set you up to rapidly bounce back when restaurant life returns to normality.

That opportunity...

Takeaway and Delivery...
but not in the same way that you've always done it!

One area that is still banned during the lockdown at the moment and actually offers you a significant opportunity is takeaways and delivery.

This might be one of the first areas to open up for restaurants once the restrictions begin to ease. People love eating out, but when they can't, they don't want to just cook for themselves every night - they still want to eat restaurant quality food - and **this is why they'll turn to takeaways and deliveries!**

Add to that the fact that at the moment, people can't go to bars, they can't go to the cinema or the theatre, and they can't go to watch sport - **so for many, a takeaway will be that one luxury that they CAN still have - and so they'll have several every week.**

In fact, we're convinced that a huge number of people who never normally have takeaways or deliveries, will start doing so - which opens up a superb opportunity for your restaurant to not only survive, but thrive!

We're certain that by the time this all ends, many more people will have used restaurants for takeaway and delivery than ever before and those restaurants who maximise the opportunity will come out on the other side with lots of new customers who want to continue using them for deliveries as well as eating in!

So, during the Coronavirus, how can your restaurant survive and then thrive?

To really make the most of the situation, you can't just wait for customers to decide to order takeaway from you. We are in a different and extreme time at the moment and so your takeaway and delivery offering needs to be different too.

The situation has changed dramatically in just the last few weeks and so to tempt local people to use your service, you now need to...

a/Clearly show how ordering from you will protect your customer's health

and

b/Actively promote your takeaway / delivery service so that everyone in your local area knows about it.

So let's look at how you can achieve both of these...

a/ Clearly show how ordering from you will protect your customer's health.

Customers want to know that they will not be at any risk of infection if they buy food from you. You can't just assume that they'll think it's safe - you need to give them all the details they need to assure them that they'll be totally safe if they either collect a meal from you, or you deliver a meal to them.

So here's what you can do...

General Policy

- Use the following as a basis to create your own general policy for health and hygiene. Change any sections that are not relevant to you and add anything else that you think appropriate. Then use it everywhere you can... printed copies should be displayed so they're visible from outside the restaurant (on doors or in the window). You should also post it on your website and on social media etc.

"We are now open for takeaways and deliveries, but in light of recent global events regarding the Covid-19 virus we have put into place the following procedures to minimise the risk of infection to both our customers and our staff..."

All of our employees are fully aware of the current requirements and are undertaking extreme levels of every health and safety procedure, to ensure that the highest possible hygiene standards are maintained, throughout every aspect of our kitchen and restaurant.

We deep clean and sanitise the restaurant and our kitchen several times every day. All door handles and frequently used surfaces are being cleaned and sanitised regularly throughout our opening hours.

Our chefs and team are taking maximum care and safety with the preparation of food.

Please rest assured that we are doing everything in our power to ensure we have the safest cooking and food preparation environment that is possible.

We appreciate all of your support during what will be an extremely difficult time for all small businesses."

Then, whether people are collecting their meal from you, or you are delivering, there are different things you can do to help them to feel safer...

Takeaway / Collection

- Accept payment over the phone or online for their order so no cash handover is needed on collection.
- If they do need to pay on collection, offer and suggest contactless options so no touching is needed by the customer.
- Some people will be concerned about coming inside your restaurant to collect their meal because they will have to touch doors and other surfaces, and also because they will also be in a room with other people. Here's how you can solve this concern...
- If you have a car park, arrange for food to be delivered to the customer's car once they arrive in the car park. You could have someone watching for cars pulling into the car park, they then go to the car to get the person's name, return to the restaurant and fetch their food for them. The food bag is simply handed to them through their car window so they never need to leave the vehicle. If your staff who deliver to the car can wear gloves then that adds yet another level of hygiene reassurance for the customer.
- If you don't have a car park, could you do the same if people simply park in the street outside your restaurant? You could call it a Pavement Pickup Service.
- If the above two options aren't possible for you and you are unable to take the food outside to people, consider how you can help customers to keep a safe distance from others when they are inside the restaurant waiting for their order. One simple option would be to clear an area and have seats that are at least 2 metres from each other. Don't have tables in the area too though as the less surfaces that can be touched, the better. Alternatively, you could have a sign on the door that limits the number of people that can come inside at any one time and

requests that anyone else should wait outside and keep a safe distance from others.

Delivery

- Suggest payment over the phone or online at the time of ordering so that no cash handover is needed on the doorstep.
- When delivering, tell the customer that when your delivery person arrives, they will ring the doorbell, put the bag on the doorstep, then step back and wait (so there's no close contact) until the customer comes and collects the bag.

b/ Actively promote your takeaway / delivery service so that everyone in your local area knows about it.

- Update your information and your opening hours on your Facebook page and in Google My Business. You don't want customers wondering if you're open, or if you offer takeaway or delivery - it needs to be very clear. And you can add your info about how you're helping them to stay safe and healthy too.
- Consider whether to continue to offer your full menu or whether a reduced menu would work better for you and help you to reduce food costs. If you decide to have a special menu, then consider adding some special meal-deals or offers on there too. You can of course, always remove this menu and go back to the full version once the Coronavirus situation changes.

- Also, look at whether you can tempt people to order food for more than one day at a time from you. For example, could you offer a package deal where customers can order one meal to eat now and another to eat over the next couple of days? Or could you offer chilled or frozen meals so that your customer collects a hot meal to eat now and several chilled packs to eat later? This has big benefits for you in that 1. it increases your revenue and 2. reduces waste as you could freeze any food left at the end of the night. It also benefits the customer because they 1. save some money and 2. they have their meals sorted for several days without leaving the house more than once.
- Upload your takeaway menu to your Facebook page and to your Google My Business page to make it really easy for customers to find and order.
- Update your Facebook header image to explain that you are open for takeaway and deliveries.
- If you use a delivery service such as Uber Eats, Mr Food etc, then don't just wait for people to find you on their app - tell people about it on your social media so that they know they can look for you on the apps too.
- If you don't already use one, consider joining a delivery service (even if just in the short term).

Here are links to the main ones in South Africa...

[Uber Eats](#)

[Mr Food](#)

[Orderin](#)

- If you already use one delivery service, could you add others so that even more local people find you when looking on those apps too?

- ***** This is possibly the most important point *****
- Use Social Media to tell your customers that you are open for takeaways and delivery once it becomes available, tell them about your special offers, and about the lengths you're going to too keep them safe.

So, depending on what Social media you use, you should regularly post on your Facebook page, Tweet on Twitter, post to Instagram etc.

We'd suggest you post on social media at least every 2 days so that your restaurant stays at the front of your customer's mind.

Regular posting on Facebook and other social media will ensure that more and more local people will get to see that you're open and that you can serve them with your delicious food in a way that is safe during the Coronavirus crisis. We know that lots of people in your area will be ordering takeaways and deliveries and so posting the right content on social media will help to ensure that they choose **your** restaurant.

- Consider 'Boosting' some of your posts on Facebook so they are seen by more local people. A normal post on your Facebook page will just be seen by some of the people who follow your page whereas a Boost is a simple Facebook ad that can be targeted to just the people in the area of your restaurant - but who don't yet follow your page.

In other words, it shows your posts to totally new potential customers. You can boost a post from R20 and we find that just R100 or so will get the post seen by hundreds of extra people, all in close proximity to your restaurant.

- If you have an email list, send an email to your full list to again tell them that you are open for takeaways and delivery, about your special offers, and about the lengths you're going to to keep them safe.
- **Build your email list by using viral competitions (win a FREE takeaway meal etc.)**

- Set up a special Facebook Offer once a week or so. Ideas for this...

A Pavement collection special discount

A 'Date Night In' special. Could this be a set meal for two plus a bottle of wine. Could you add in a rose too?

A special set meal deal

Facebook offers are given loads of exposure by Facebook and so will be seen by lots of people in your area.

So those are lots of ways to ensure you get customers ordering from you. But then each time customers do have a takeaway or delivery from you...

- Include a coupon or an offer in their takeaway bag. For example, 10% off your next takeaway order, or a free bottle of wine with your next order. They're going to be ordering takeaway again soon so let's make sure it's from you.
- Ask the customer to take a photo of their food and post it on Facebook to say they're enjoying a delivery / takeaway from you. This then gets seen by all of their friends and increases the chances that they too will order from you.
- Ask the customer to Check-In at your restaurant on Facebook when they're eating their takeaway. They can do this even when they're in their own homes. Again, this gives you good exposure as it will be seen by all of their Facebook friends.

Conclusion

So that is your Restaurant Survival Guide. A combination of safeguarding your customers and promoting your takeaway and delivery service in ways that will increase your turnover, help you to survive during the remainder of the Coronavirus crisis... and then be able to thrive once things return to normality.

It's now down to you to take what we've shared with you and put it to work for your restaurant.

We wish you every success!

Can we help you?

If you can see how everything you've read here could really help your restaurant, but you're just not sure how to actually do it, then we can help...

Feel free to contact me at quinton@qmarketing.co.za or schedule an obligation free 30 minute call here:

<https://calendly.com/quinton-marks/strategy-call>