



REOPENING RESTAURANTS: RELAUNCH TOOLKIT

# Messaging + Communication

Returning guests must feel confident and safe to be willing to part with their dining dollars once restrictions have been lifted. This brief includes how to message on-premise as well as opportunities to engage with your online followers during and after the pandemic.

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## ON-PREMISE STRATEGIES

Diners will emerge from the stay-at-home restrictions craving social connection and a return to normalcy. Some guests, however, will be feeling less secure with their financial position and be worried about the future. The best response to both is to exude confidence and to advertise that your business is thoroughly prepared to provide an exceptional experience and is a safe place to begin to reconvene — even if at a distance.

### **Educate the Guest**

Inform the guests of all of the measures the business is taking to stay safe and remind them that responsible dining is the new normal. Maintain a positive stance and actively communicate guidelines for groups and occupancy. Post guidelines in public spaces within the restaurant.

### **Communicate Options**

Highlight the new options available to guests who may not all feel comfortable engaging with the restaurant the same way as before. Use every public-facing channel to clearly communicate hours, policies, and operational changes as conditions that impact the business evolve.

### **Highlight the Experience**

Find ways to communicate unique offerings, creative approaches to a new normal, and steps taken to provide social connection.

## SIGNAGE + VISUAL COMMUNICATION

Smart social distancing wayfinding and signage is an opportunity to be both creative and effective through brand identity. Consider the following options to help diners acclimate to your restaurant's response to the new normal.

### Floor Stencils

Help your guests, delivery drivers, and waiting patrons feel more comfortable by using floor stencils to mark off appropriate distances between parties. Use creative floor stencils on the interior and exterior of the business to indicate group waiting areas and appropriate distances between parties. A well-experienced creative firm will be able to address this in a meaningful way.

### Sanitation Policies

Give your returning guests the peace of mind to know that you are doing everything you can to keep them safe. Post your new social distancing policies and sanitation procedures in a prominent location in your restaurant or bar and on your website.

### Hours of Operation Marquee

As hours of operations may be dynamic for the foreseeable future, use a marquee menu board placed prominently at the host stand or in your front window to communicate clearly with guests.

### Reserved Signs

Well-designed reservation markers for tables can help ensure that appropriate space is earmarked but can remain flexible. It may be that guests prefer to skip the hosting and seating formalities in lieu of receiving a set table assignment prior to them arriving at the restaurant.

### Sanitation Symbols

Provide clearly marked sanitation spaces on entry and exit and strategically around the establishment.

### Partitioned Pickup

Clearly mark areas for guest and delivery pickup within the establishment so diners and drivers don't have to guess or needlessly approach staff when picking up food.

## DIGITAL + SOCIAL MEDIA

Many of our restaurant and bar clients are asking how and when to communicate with regular patrons. While many operators are still recovering from the shock of their sudden closing and quarantine, they are equally as anxious to maintain the relationships they have built up over the years.

The current strategy of several savvy restaurant and bar operators is to leverage existing digital and social media channels as the primary vehicle for communication and marketing during the crisis. With many people stuck at home looking online for any manner of diversion, digital and social platforms are the best media to lean on — websites, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok, etc.

The key to being successful during this very difficult period is to remain top of mind through the authenticity of your content. Leverage the assets, personalities, and goodwill that made your restaurant successful in the first place to generate compelling content. Below are some content ideas that successful restaurateurs have begun to use during the crisis to engage with their guests:

### Demonstrations + How-Tos

Quick demonstrations available across a variety of social platforms are an easy way to add value to your online following. Leverage your team's expertise for anything from cleaning tips to furniture repair to create content for your social channels. Sharing helpful information and tips to improve people's lives are always welcome.

### Community Engagement

Anything your business does to support your community or industry during the pandemic will be well-received online. Supporting community kitchens, local charities and people in need, and legislation efforts are all great content opportunities. Although many companies and businesses are doing it already, supporting those on the front line fighting (e.g., doctors, nurses) will connect you with your audiences.

### Reminder Videos + Content

A simple video walking through your establishment and letting your guests know that you are thinking about them and their families and can't wait for them to return is a great, straightforward strategy for reengaging with your loyal guests.



**Neighborhood Support**

Get closer to your community and industry partners to share early experiences and promote cross-selling, collaboration, rewards, or other creative ways of supporting and highlighting the broader community of local restaurants.

**Behind-the-Scenes**

A lot of effort and energy has gone into responding to the crisis. Give guests a backstage pass to viewing all of the work that has gone into protecting their dining experience and making it unique.

**Recipes**

Think of cocktail and food recipes that are appropriate for at-home use or, even better, a quarantine-specific recipe to explore with standard household items. It makes for great social media and is a low-lift tactic to engage your following.

**Special Events**

Create a digital happy hour, provide live-streamed entertainment, or even broadcast the sunset from your restaurant's location. Remind your guests of what they loved about your establishment in the first place.

**Customer Polling + Opinion**

Don't assume that every guest is ready for the same collective experience — use online polling and guest feedback to float changes in format or service style to your guests before you open. Use real-time feedback to evolve your offering.

**“Coming Soon” Messaging**

Once you have landed on a viable reopening date, combine any of the above strategies with a “coming soon” message to let your guests know when you will be back in business.

# Contact

## STREETSENSE EAT + DRINK TEAM

For more information or to create solutions tailored to your establishment, contact the Eat + Drink team at Streetsense.



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