

Three Simple Things Foodservice Professionals Should Consider When Crafting Their Menus

Enticing consumers with imagery is one of the recommendations.

CHICAGO — As today's foodservice professionals navigate a pandemic-conscious culture, creating a menu that appeals to consumers is more of a moving target than ever before, especially with the ubiquity of QR code menus.

Although young adult consumers are familiar with no-touch transactions and proficient at using technology in all aspects of their lives, a new study from Y-Pulse found that 72 percent of consumers miss printed menus, and 59 percent voice concerns that scanning a QR code to get a menu could have potential security issues.



“Although young adult consumers are typically among the first to embrace new technology, the consumers we surveyed shared their frustrations and concerns about today’s restaurant menus,” said Sharon Olson, executive director of Y-Pulse. “Techy-no-touch menus have their advantages and are undoubtedly here to stay, but there are a number of ways savvy restaurateurs can entice their patrons with modern menus.”

According to Y-Pulse, there are three simple things foodservice professionals will want to consider when creating menus:

1. Offer Options

Restaurant patrons are returning to restaurants because they want the experience of dining out, and the menu can be a key aspect of that experience. Offering a choice of a QR code menu or a printed menu gives everyone a choice.

2. Stay on Top of Menu Changes

An unpredictable supply chain and the challenges of maintaining staff in both front and back of house makes it hard to consistently deliver the same menu items. Restaurant patrons have come to accept changing circumstances and just want to know what is available before they order. Seventy-two percent of survey respondents said they are frustrated when restaurants do not have updated menus.

3. Invite Diners With Photographs

A restaurant menu is an invitation to experience items that are special to the establishment. In the early days of the pandemic, limited offerings and brief descriptions made for a quick transition to QR code menus. Now that there is more familiarity with creating these menus, it is important to consider them to be an expression of a brand’s image and a platform to showcase appetizing menu offerings.

Y-Pulse began surveying Gen Z and millennial consumers nationwide in the summer of 2020 to gain a better understanding of their dining expectations, attitudes and desires as the global pandemic was dramatically changing the foodservice business landscape. Since then, more than 2,000 consumers have been surveyed. The research cited in the

firm's newest release focuses on the most recent wave of the study released in January 2022, which includes results from a nationwide survey of 632 young adult consumers aged 18-34.

Founded in 2004, Y-Pulse is a division of Olson Communications Inc.