

Who Do You Turn To
When Everyone Turns To You?

SURVIVING THE PANDEMIC

RESULTS A VIDEO SERIES
THRU STRATEGY Hosted by FRED LeFRANC,
Chaos Strategist & Change Agent
Featuring RTS Leadership & Guests



Strategies to Navigate the fallout from COVID-19

Results Thru Strategy, Inc. will shortly launch a video series ("Surviving the Pandemic") to aid restaurant operators struggling with the effects on their business of the novel Coronavirus. Hosted by RTS Founder & Chaos Strategist, Fred LeFranc, the videos will focus on delivery/takeout, human resources, technology, culinary, finance, real estate and marketing. The series is designed to help owners, managers and team members regain and even improve business. **We are under no illusion about the damage so far. We believe "Surviving the Pandemic" will help you weather the worst of it.**

CLICK THE VIDEO IMAGE TO VIEW
"Restaurants to Grocerants" A Survival Strategy"



VIDEO NOTES AND TIPS

Talk to your purveyors/distro partners: How can you create partnerships and an "everyone floats" mentality in partnership with them?
Create simple menus: Clearly price and display the wares- handwritten signage works at grocery and mercantile, chalkboards, and use your website as a display board of what you're selling.

Change up your space: Re-purpose tables, counters, benches- create space to display but also social distance.

Commit to the "new model" of your temporary brand: It's ok to not be "on brand" with what you are selling as long as you are servicing YOUR customers needs- You are more closely connected to YOUR customers than a grocery and know their preferences and can be even more-so closely connected by asking them in advance leveraging your customer database/3rd party delivery data on your consumers etc.

Take some care with your food display: Make it professional, exciting, colorful, organized, create a perception of abundance, ease-of-sale.

Create positive ambience: Smiling/helpful staff, good music!, TVs on anything but news!, lighting, provide an experience, be the port in the storm, the calm in the chaos.

Suggestion for social distancing: neatly taping a grid on the floor of 6' squares for easy identification of safe distancing- Trader Joe's is using carts to limit the amount of customers and to socially distance people (a cart length away)- perhaps try partnering and borrowing carts from grocery for easy shopping

Cold storage considerations: FOH reach-in coolers if available in your concept- consider/ ice chests to limit the amount of opening and closing and loss of temp in your walk in. The last thing you need right now is refrigeration issues. Re-ice and restock cold items to keep them cold and safe.

Create an over-the-top clean environment: Sanitizer stations/dispensers for Guests- all over the store- Visible staff sanitizing surfaces, door handles, etc.

Don't forget the amenities: Fresh Coffee and Water station with disposable cups for guests as they shop (add sliced cucumbers or lemon to water, optional - "Think Hotel lobby" make consumers feel at ease as much as possible. Provide a fun "PICK ME UP" for customers that make the effort to come and get it vs. delivery - ie. Free pack of TP or even a funny joke to alleviate stress- something unexpected- or fresh flowers bouquet

Thinking about what to sell: POTENTIAL SALE ITEM IDEAS (as Available) [Not all items make sense to all operations]

Basics:

- Fresh eggs and milk
- Dried pasta
- All Purpose Flour
- Dried or even par cooked grains
- Fresh fruit (individual or pack-sized)
- Fresh Vegetables/Lettuce (also bagged)
- Bottles of Water and other Bottled beverages
- Toilet paper (individual “hotel rolls” or pack-sized)
- Other Paper Products: Paper Towels, Kleenex, plastic utensils, sani-wipes, etc.
- Proteins: Individual or value packed – chicken, Port, steak, ground beef, ground turkey, Hot Dogs, etc.
- Various Canned/Jarred Goods: Veggies, chili, pasta sauces, stews, soups, etc.
- Cereal – Individual boxed like hotel breakfasts or family-sized if available
- Breads, as available: Basic Sliced loaves, Hot Dog buns, Shelf-stable English Muffins, Tortillas & Taco Shells
- Family Taco Kits
- Frozen Meals (either your created brand-specific [with instructions] or retail grocery brands, where possible)

Level two items:

- Hand soap, bath soap bars, shampoo, toothpaste, disposable razors
- Basic First Aid: Band-Aids, aspirin, Tylenol
- Kid Snacks: Fruit Roll-ups, Goldfish Crackers
- Chips, Salsa, Cheese sauce, Potato Chips, Crackers
- Facemasks made of food types of items- beauty goods, bubble bath, bath salts (can be made in house from food items and sold as self- care and de-stress add-on's) Oatmeal, avocado, egg, etc.

Level three items: [Differentiators!]

- Coloring Books, Crayons
- Boxed puzzles / Games / Playing Cards
- Cookbooks
- Cooking utensils/knives or kitchen tools- can get these from distributors: chef knives, veggie peelers, cookie cutters? Cutting boards. People who have never cooked before are cooking, what will they need?

How to charge: Check your local municipality for tax rules, some have a different rate for food staples/prepackaged/and or unprepared goods.

Account for sales: Create a new category in the POS to account for the sales if possible. Ease-of-Sale Considerations – Key item is reporting. Consider revenue first, orders can be transferred between systems at a later date if necessary.

The ring-up: Handheld devices are available – Check with your current technology partners. There are some providers providing free options to the industry like OneDine and Toast Now.

Communicate and inform: Use exterior trade dress additions (Banners, floaties, balloons, air dancers, etc.)

Leverage social media: Get the word out, targeted spend, etc.

Leverage your website homepage: Change this daily to display and update your wares to make it easy and transparent for your customers. What do you have, how much is it, how do they get it?

Set fair pricing: NO GOUGING (defeats the purpose of Social Responsibility) However charge what makes sense for you to offer the wares and be of service. Consider Cost + 20% model (limited labor allows a profit margin)

What’s on close out? Distributors who may be throwing away food or have lots to move quickly. What items can you get a break on to re-sell but that also make sense for your customers and your brand. Work WITH your purveyors- they have beef? Order beef and make ropa vieja, beef stew, beef carnitas, beef stroganoff, whatever beef prep works with your concept or not if you can cook it well and offer it safely and inexpensively, an easy way to pass on the savings of food cost

New World, New Terms: Create better partnerships with your distributors, ask for new terms to ease the burden and uncertainty that this model will work for you. Ask them to put some skin in the game.

Embrace the service part of your hospitality DNA: Find out the types of items YOUR customers need and want, not what you think they should have - leverage your email list to ask.

Par Cook for Convenience: Grocery stores sell par cooked rice for 2 dollars per single serve portion. Take a cue here. There are novice home cooks who are scared to cook rice and they need you. Lentils, rice, legumes and quinoa are all fantastic options.

Marinate that Meat: Take a “cue” from the grocery meat counter and add your flair by selling raw meats and meat analogs like tofu in marinades/ on-skewers ready to cook

Prep, Cook and Freeze: This is good way for your customers to take home a bunch of meals in one trip without worrying about spoilage. Cook up soups, stews and comfort favorites. It’s easy for them to re-heat and offers peace of mind that they can heat it to 140 to kill anything they may be worried about.

Consider connecting the dots for your customers: Provide free printed recipes from your restaurant, online recipes or even zoom cook-alongs to make the connection to your restaurant and your community stronger and entertain your clientele.

Get creative, you’re a chef, or you have a chef, after all - create ways to celebrate the art of cooking (albeit at home) with your restaurant community.

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