

# Mobile Marketing for Restaurants: Building Customer Loyalty

*Learn more about how restaurants embrace mobile marketing to foster loyalty, elevate experiences, and stand out in a competitive dining landscape.*

LAKE MARY, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES,  
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One has to meet the audience where they are — and in this digital age, the audience is more than likely on their phones. As the restaurant works to get the acclaim for delicious dishes and top-of-the-line service, relationships can be built with customers through mobile [marketing tactics](#) that actually work. Turn first-timers into regulars with intentionally crafted campaigns that include elements such as loyalty programs, email marketing, content marketing, reviews and ratings, and influencer marketing. Keep reading to learn more about how customer loyalty can be established and grown and more patrons brought to the table.



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## DEVELOP LOYALTY PROGRAMS

The best way to keep customers coming back? Reward them. By running promotions and offering special perks, patrons can be made to feel special and appreciated while pushing initiatives that help reach the restaurant's goals. For example, if a midafternoon lull has been noticed, traffic could be increased by running a limited time happy hour promotion.

While many restaurants have built out apps for perks and special services, something as simple as automated text messages that send to a subscribed list of customers can be instituted. In fact, a recent study showed that 82% of participants opened every text message, making this a useful, streamlined tool to connect with the [target audience](#). However, this privilege should not be abused — texts should be sent sparingly and with intentionality so “unsubscribe” texts are not received.



At evok, we recognize how vital mobile engagement is for restaurants in today's digital age. We're excited to empower restaurants to embrace mobile strategies that focus on their guests."

*Larry Meador*

No matter what platform is used to connect with consumers, the key to an effective promotion is to inspire a sense of urgency and make the message feel personalized. This may look like using phrases such as "limited-time only" and using their first name in the copy.

Repeat visitation can also be encouraged by creating a points system that incentivizes customers to rack up reward points in exchange for discounts or freebies when they hit certain milestones. This method has proven itself

at popular food service chains such as Starbucks and Chick-fil-A. For a successful loyalty program, one needs to ensure the platform is easy-to-use and convenient so that consumers actually want to take the extra step to use it.

#### TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

With 305.2 million users nationwide, it's no secret that social media has changed the way we live and make decisions about spending money and time. With the rise of "influencers," the meaning of word-of-mouth marketing has transformed from conversations among friends to sponsored posts on favorite Instagram accounts.

While the word influencer may bring to mind celebrities with follower counts in the millions, there may be micro-influencers nearby that have a special interest in local food spots and are always looking to try something new. These micro-influencers can be reached out to and invited to try new menu items or offer a special deal in exchange for reviewing the establishment to their followers. These social media mavens ideally already have established trust with their audience, so the restaurant can benefit from this as their followers are more likely to try a spot they've heard good things about from someone whose taste they trust.

Social media is only effective when the audience is known and messages, content, and partnerships are crafted to specifically reach them. Once the key demographic is identified, their evolving [interests and trends](#) that would speak to them should be monitored. By doing background work, time and resources are saved while one of the most powerful tools is optimized. Not only should content that interests the audience be posted, engagement with them in the comments should occur so relationships can be cultivated and loyalty built.

#### ENCOURAGE REVIEWS AND RATINGS

It's essential to encourage reviews from satisfied customers to improve ranking and visibility as people search for restaurants in their area. Potential patrons look to reviews to not only see what previous visitors thought of the restaurant but also additional information about the menu items from a seemingly unbiased source. In addition to 93% of customers considering reviews before a purchase, consumers are willing to spend 31% more at a business with good reviews.

Luckily, both mobile marketing tactics discussed earlier can be used to gain more reviews — the loyalty program platform and social media accounts can encourage already engaged customers to leave reviews. Once customers leave a review, responses should come quickly to show care about customer relationships and responsiveness to comments.

However, if reviews are encouraged there are bound to be some less-than-stellar ones among the positive reviews. While one may feel compelled to defend the establishment, this feedback should be taken with a grain of salt. The customer should be thanked for their review, an apology offered for unmet expectations, and encouragement given to reach out directly so course correction can occur. The goal is to show empathy and make them feel seen without taking responsibility for things out of control or untrue. This display of humility goes far not only with the patron who left a poor review, but also potential consumers reading the reviews.

#### MOBILE MARKETING THAT MOVES THE NEEDLE

Using a blend of these tactics will help the restaurant experience desired growth and acclaim. However, while kitchen skills have been mastered, mastering the mobile scene can feel impossible — that's where assistance comes in. To learn more about the latest mobile marketing trends and how advantages can be gained, contact the team today to develop and implement strategies that work.

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