

What's WORKING? What's NOT? What's NEXT

for your favorite restaurant?



OUR PANEL:

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- Carlos Delgado, CEO of The Boiling Crab Hawaii
- Rick Nakashima, CEO of Rainbow Drive-In Kalihi, Gyu-Kaku Hawaii, and Ruby Tuesday Hawaii
- Moderated by Dale Yasunaga, ProService Hawaii

The Conversation on July 9, 2020

- *What have you tried that's working?*
- *What strategies have you tried to drive revenue and manage the bottom line?*
- *How are you putting safety first?*
- *How to stay positive during these times of uncertainty?*

KEY TAKEAWAYS

There's no silver bullet and restaurants must *optimize every part of their business* to hang on for the next few months. And while the future remains full of uncertainty, it's important to stay positive and look to your team and partners for support.

Tactical Solutions

- **Continue to optimize takeout.** Look for opportunities to grow your takeout/delivery business and make it convenient for your customers to pick up and go. For example, create a takeout window and provide curbside service to make takeout an attractive option.
- **Adapt your menu.**
 - Offer items that use *less expensive ingredients* and look for ways to *keep food waste down*.
 - Focus on dishes that can be *executed with a smaller crew*. This may mean expanding certain items and getting rid of others on your menu; however, these changes can give you the flexibility to do more volume without adding more labor.
 - Add *new menu items* that appeal to your customers' palette. For example, offer local dishes that are not normally on the menu to appeal to a local crowd.
 - Adjust when to offer specialty items. For example, offer oysters only on the weekends when you have a bigger crowd or when you know your regulars will stop by.

- **Adjust hours of operations.** If your customers are coming in earlier and not staying later, adjust your last seating and your hours of operation to match demand.
- **Keep communication lines open with your landlord.** Work with your landlord to come up with a fair rent payment arrangement.
- **Work with your vendors.** Partner with your food suppliers and other vendors to find ways to lower your expenses, either through product substitutions or additional discounts.

Marketing Tips

- **Location strengths.** Consider the perks of your location. If you're a beachfront restaurant, market that experience to drive more traffic to your business. If you have a takeout window that is easily accessible from the street, market the convenience to your customers.
- **Offer specials.** Customers are looking for value. Entice them by offering specials of the day or discounted items to increase traffic and sales.
- **Social media.** Use social media to showcase your location, special promotions, and safety protocols with your customers. Be mindful of comments and feedback from customers and employees as that reflects on the experience at your restaurant.
- **Talk with your customers.** Learn more about your customers and get feedback on what they want. Use the feedback to make changes to your operations.

Put Safety First

- **Keep talking about safety.** Talk about it in your marketing materials and make it visible how important safety is in your restaurant. Ongoing communication will make both your customers and employees more aware that you care about them and their safety.
- **Train your managers and staff for tough situations.** Continue to have dialogue and training with your employees on how to manage difficult situations, for example with customers who do not want to follow new safety rules.

Keep up the Positive Vibes

- **Stay positive.** In these tough times, it's important to stay positive, keep communication lines open, and treat people right.
- **Surround yourself with a good team.** Your team is a source of new ideas and positive energy. Lean on your managers and your staff for feedback and ideas to try in your restaurant.