

Restaurant Marketing & Guest Loyalty — Workbook

This workbook turns the course into the assets and routines that fill your dining room and bring guests back. Work through one section per module: audit and optimize your local search presence, build a sustainable social content calendar, design a loyalty and email engine with real reward math, and stand up a reputation and marketing dashboard. By the end you will have a working marketing system for your own restaurant, measured against covers and repeat visits, not just a set of notes.

Own Your Local Search

Audit your Google Business Profile, clean up your listings, and remove friction between discovery and a booked table.

Worksheet: Google Business Profile completeness audit

Open your Google Business Profile and score each element below as complete, partial, or missing. Anything not complete is your immediate to-do list.

Primary category set to the most specific option (e.g. Italian Restaurant)

Hours, including holiday hours, accurate

Phone, website, and reservation or order link present

Number of photos currently uploaded (target 20 to 30 plus)

Attributes set (outdoor seating, takeout, reservations, accessibility, dietary)

Full menu and price level published

Q and A section enabled and seeded

Date of most recent Google Business Profile post

Exercise: NAP consistency cleanup

Search your restaurant on Google, Yelp, Apple Maps, Facebook, TripAdvisor, and Bing, and record exactly how your name, address, and phone appear on each. Standardize to one format everywhere.

- Write the single exact Name, Address, and Phone format you will use everywhere from now on.

- Which listings currently show a different address format, old phone number, or wrong hours?

- Are there any duplicate listings for your restaurant that need to be merged or removed?
- Which tool (Yext, Moz Local, BrightLocal, or manual) will you use to fix and monitor these, and by when?

Exercise: Remove the friction from discovery to booking

Walk the guest journey from a Google search to a confirmed table or order on your own phone, and note every point of friction.

- From your Google listing, can a guest reserve, see availability, or get directions in one tap? What is missing?
- Is your phone number tap-to-call on mobile, and who answers it during service?
- Is there a first-party online ordering option, and how does it compare in cost to the delivery apps you use?
- What one change would most reduce the steps between a hungry searcher and a booked cover this week?

Checklist: Local search checklist

- Google Business Profile is claimed, verified, and fully completed
- 20 to 30 plus quality photos are uploaded and refreshed monthly
- A Google Business Profile post goes out at least weekly
- NAP is identical across Google, Yelp, Apple, Facebook, TripAdvisor, and Bing
- All duplicate listings are removed or merged
- A reservation or waitlist tool surfaces a Reserve button on Google and the website
- The website names the city and neighborhood in titles, headings, and copy
- Listings are audited quarterly so hours, menu, and photos never go stale

Social Media That Drives Covers

Pick your platforms, build a repeatable content calendar, and make every post end with an invitation to come in.

Exercise: Choose your platforms and content buckets

Decide the two or three platforms that fit your concept and audience, then define the recurring content buckets you will rotate through.

- Which two or three platforms (Instagram, TikTok, Facebook) fit your concept and your guests, and why?
- List five to seven content buckets you can produce repeatedly (e.g. dish hero, behind-the-scenes, staff spotlight, specials, guest features).
- What is a realistic weekly cadence you can actually sustain for feed posts, Stories, and short video?
- When will you run your first batch production session to build a two-week backlog of content?

Worksheet: One-week content calendar

Plan one full week of posts. Fill a row per planned post so posting becomes a schedule, not a scramble. Day and time to post

Platform

Content bucket

Format (photo, Reel, Story, short video)

Caption hook (first line)

Call to action (book, link in bio, order direct, come in)

Hashtags and geotag

Scheduled in tool? (Later, Buffer, Planoly, Meta Business Suite)

Exercise: Engineer user-generated content and a creator plan

Identify how you will get guests and local creators to make content for you, and how you will amplify it.

- Which one or two dishes or drinks are photogenic enough to beg to be shared, and how could you make them more so?

- Where will you display your handle and branded hashtag (menus, tables, walls, check presenter)?

- Name two or three genuinely local micro-influencers whose audience could actually visit you.

- What comp or perk will you offer a creator in exchange for honest coverage, and how will you measure the result?

Checklist: Social media checklist

Two or three platforms are chosen and the rest are deliberately skipped

Five to seven repeatable content buckets are defined

A sustainable weekly cadence is set and scheduled ahead in a tool

Content is batch-produced so posting never depends on remembering

Every post has a hook in the first line and a clear call to action

Posts are geotagged and use a focused local plus dish hashtag mix

Guest content is reposted with credit and a branded hashtag is displayed in-store

Paid boosts use proven organic posts, tight local targeting, and a trackable offer

Loyalty, Email, and the Repeat Visit

Calculate guest lifetime value, design loyalty reward economics you can afford, and build the email and SMS lists you own.

Worksheet: Guest lifetime value and repeat rate

Estimate the value of a loyal guest and your current repeat rate so the loyalty investment is grounded in numbers.

Average check per guest (dollars)

Average visit frequency (visits per year)

Average relationship length (years)

Guest lifetime revenue (check x frequency x years)

Gross margin percentage

Guest lifetime profit (lifetime revenue x margin)

Estimated current repeat rate (% of guests who return)

Target repeat rate and the value of closing that gap

Exercise: Design your loyalty program

Choose a program structure, set the reward economics, and write the one-sentence enrollment pitch your team will use.

- Which structure fits your concept best (points per dollar, visit punch, tiered VIP, surprise and delight, or membership), and why?
 - What is your reward cost as a percentage of member spend, and what reward will you give (in food, not cash)?
 - At what visit or spend threshold is a reward earned, and does that drive an extra visit?
 - Write the irresistible one-sentence enrollment offer your staff will pitch at the register or table.
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Exercise: Build the email and SMS engine

Plan how you will capture contacts on every shift and which automated campaigns you will turn on first.

- What are your top three contact-capture points (loyalty sign-up, online ordering, reservations, Wi-Fi, table QR)?
 - What reason to join (welcome reward, birthday perk, early access) will you offer, and is your SMS consent compliant?
 - Which automated flows will you set up first: welcome series, birthday or anniversary, and win-back at 60 or 90 days?
 - Which slow daypart will you target with a members-only offer to flatten demand, and to which segment?
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Checklist: Loyalty and owned-channel checklist

- Guest lifetime value and current repeat rate are calculated
- A loyalty structure is chosen with affordable reward economics (roughly 3 to 10 percent of spend)
- A one-sentence enrollment offer exists and staff are trained to ask every guest
- Enrollment rate per shift is tracked like an upsell
- Contacts are captured at sign-up, ordering, reservations, Wi-Fi, and table QR
- Explicit SMS consent is collected and opt-outs are honored
- Welcome, birthday, and win-back flows are automated and running
- Every campaign is measured by redemptions and covers, not just opens

Reputation and a Marketing That Pays

Build a steady flow of reviews, respond in a way that wins guests back, and tie every marketing effort to covers on one page.

Worksheet: Review baseline and generation plan

Record your current review standing across platforms and design the frictionless ask that will lift it.

Google: average rating and number of reviews

Yelp: average rating and number of reviews

TripAdvisor: average rating and number of reviews

Current review-response rate (%)

How and when staff currently ask for reviews

Planned one-tap ask method (QR on check, thank-you text link)

Automated ask trigger (loyalty or reservation platform)

Weekly new-review target

Exercise: Practice the response framework

Take one real negative review and one positive review and draft replies using the course framework.

- For the negative review, draft a reply that thanks, acknowledges the specific issue, apologizes without excuses, and moves it offline.
 - How will you empower frontline staff to resolve small issues on the spot before they become reviews?
 - What is your follow-up step to confirm a poor experience was made right and recover the guest?
 - Draft a brief, warm reply to the positive review that reinforces the relationship.
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Worksheet: One-page marketing dashboard

Stand up the weekly dashboard that ties your marketing to covers and repeat visits. Fill one week to start the habit.

Week of

Covers and average check vs last week and last year

New vs returning guests and repeat rate (%)

Loyalty enrollments and active members; email and SMS list size

Review volume, average star rating, and response rate

Social reach, engagement, and follower growth

Marketing spend and return on ad spend (ROAS)

Redemptions per campaign and cost per acquired guest

Checklist: Weekly marketing routine checklist

- The one-page marketing dashboard is updated and read every week
- Social posts go out on the set cadence and comments and guest content are engaged within a day
- The Google Business Profile post is refreshed and hours, photos, and menu are confirmed current
- Every new review across platforms is responded to within 48 hours
- The scheduled email or SMS campaign is sent and automated flows are confirmed running
- Campaigns use trackable offer codes so ROAS and cost per guest can be calculated
- Anything that cannot show a return is reworked or cut
- Enrollments, repeat rate, and ROAS are reviewed monthly and budget is reallocated to what drives covers

Your Action Plan

1. Claim and fully complete your Google Business Profile, upload 20 to 30 photos, and schedule a weekly profile post.
2. Standardize your name, address, and phone to one format and fix or remove every inconsistent and duplicate listing.
3. Connect a reservation or waitlist tool so a Reserve button appears on Google and your homepage.
4. Choose two or three social platforms, define your content buckets, and batch-produce a two-week backlog.
5. Publish on a sustainable weekly cadence with a hook and a clear call to action on every post, scheduled in a tool.
6. Calculate your guest lifetime value and current repeat rate to size the prize of retention.
7. Design a loyalty program with affordable food-based rewards and a one-sentence enrollment offer your team can pitch.
8. Capture guest contacts on every shift and turn on automated welcome, birthday, and win-back email and SMS flows.
9. Set up a one-tap review ask, aim for a steady weekly trickle, and respond to every review within 48 hours.
10. Stand up the one-page marketing dashboard, tie spend to covers with trackable offers, and run the full weekly routine.

