

# Operator's Edge<sup>SM</sup>

The Independent Operator's Resource for Foodservice Industry Intelligence



Issue 01 | July 2007

## Lessons Learned at the National Restaurant Association Show

Sore feet, lots of food, and a whole bunch of new ideas. That is how one attendee describes the 2007 NRA Show. An observation:

- Even when some of the world's finest coffee purveyors are offering their product for free, Starbucks addicts will still wait in line for their familiar fix.
- One of the hottest menu trends is bite-sized desserts.
- Clamato blended with Budweiser, chile powder, hot sauce and salt is actually pretty tasty.

For more observations of the show, read the full story.

[Full Story](#)



## Miss Gregory's American Kitchen

### July is National Blueberry Month!

In honor of that, Miss Gregory offers a delicious Blueberry Cobbler recipe that serves 4-6.



[View Recipe](#)

## \$ Money Matters

### Myth: Cash is the Best Choice for a Motivational Award.

There's a myth that cash is the best choice for motivating your employees. If you're thinking about using an incentive program to get your staff to behave in a certain way, they may say Cash is King. But the facts say that tangible awards actually motivate them to work harder and achieve more.

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## All About The Menu

### Cash In on the Mini Dessert Trend

Guest check add-ons like appetizers, beverages and desserts are among the most profitable menu items, but can also be the most challenging to sell. Getting the dessert order can be the most difficult as research shows that over 80% of consumers report being too full and over 60% indicate that restaurant portions are too large. So how can operators capture the high profit desserts offer while overcoming the number one objection: Serve bite-sized desserts.

[Full Story](#)



## Enhance Your Business

### In Honor of National Hot Dog Month, Some Answers to those Dogging Questions

July is National Hot Dog Month, and Americans will be consuming them in record numbers this summer. In 1959 the Detroit Tigers and Tiger Stadium were searching for the best hot dog to satisfy their demanding baseball fans, and Ball Park Franks won hands down.

Add fun and variety by offering unique toppings to create a signature dog all your own. Or set up a hot dog bar and turn the local game on the TV to bring in the sports fans. For more ideas, read the full story.

[Full Story](#)



## Consumer Insights

The Boomers of today do not care that they are getting older; they see this as the prime of their life. But, hiding behind all the optimism are the constraints of a financial reality that is not as rosy as many would think. By keeping four factors in mind, the foodservice operator can expect to see Boomers walk through their front door, spending the money they have in your operation.

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## Good For You

### "Wellness" Trend Creates New Opportunities for Chefs

Restaurant patrons are becoming interested in "wellness" and are doing more to achieve it. Many chefs are discovering new taste combinations that not only meet the wellness criteria, they actually provide patrons with exciting new fare.

[Full Story](#)



## Marketing Your Business

### Marketing Tactics Drive Traffic

Some of the newest marketing tactics that restaurants are using, according to Quantified Marketing Group, are publicity events and marketing their restaurants as entertainment, not just a meal away from home. To help you think about how to bring that excitement into your operation, check out these marketing tips. August recognizes National Mustard Day. We've listed six months of promotional holidays to get you started

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## Lessons Learned at the National Restaurant Association Show

By Michael Cheng – Southwest Minnesota State University

Sore feet, lots of food, and a whole bunch of new ideas. That is how one attendee describes the 2007 NRA show. What an event. It is by far the largest conglomeration of new products, ideas, and trends ever assembled under one roof. The show is all about the hospitality industry. Everything you ever needed to run a restaurant, catering business, or even a hotel, is available there. There are things that you didn't even know existed. The Show is also about the people. People talking, listening, and connecting with other people. Here are some of my observations from the 2007 NRA Show:

1. Even when some of the world's finest coffee purveyors using the finest espresso making equipment are offering their product for free, Starbucks addicts will still wait in line for their familiar fix. And pay for it. (What do you have on your menu that's highly addictive?)
2. Only at the NRA Show can you get cinnamon pretzels, cream-cheese pretzels, jalepeno-cheese pretzels and a classic hot pretzel within 10 feet of each other. (What ordinary item do you serve that can be updated like that?)
3. Clamato blended with Budweiser, chile powder, hot sauce and salt is actually pretty tasty. The Clamato spokesperson claims Mexican-Americans have been drinking Clamato this way for years.
4. A California company, Spectrum Plastics, makes a bag that fits around any carryout container and theoretically lets you carry it without creating that inevitable puddle of sauce at the bottom of your bag.
5. Chinet is trying to go green with its compostable diningware.



One of the hottest menu trends right now is bite-sized desserts. A number of restaurants throughout the country are offering a trio of small, bite-size desserts as an option for customers who like to share and sample a variety of desserts after a wonderful meal. There is also definitely a movement toward chefs cooking with locally grown and organic produce, as evidenced by some of the educational seminars available. There are some very distinct advantages towards using locally grown foods, such as stronger support of local agriculture, knowing where the food comes from, having the opportunity to see how it's produced, and most importantly, being able to maximize the flavor of that ingredient in your dishes.

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Another trend has to do with bottled water. Tap water may be the choice for many people but there is no denying the popularity of bottled water on the tables at fine dining spots.

The number of choices has increased well beyond sparkling and non-sparkling. Be sure you get your share of this high-margin item whether it's offered inside or from your take-out menu. Post-show news: Watch San Francisco where legislators are trying to ban bottled water for "green" reasons, that is lessening the proliferation of plastic bottles.

Other menu trends include: specialty sandwiches, Asian appetizers, espresso/specialty coffees, whole-grain bread, Mediterranean cuisine, pan-seared items, fresh herbs, Latin American cuisine, exotic mushrooms and grilled items. It's not too hard to find all those things on local menus, depending on how exotic you need to go for your mushrooms.

On products, there was an increased emphasis on ethnic cuisine and foreign food. Beverage companies are offering tastes of Brazil and Bavaria, India and Indonesia, North Africa and New Zealand, among other countries. Tabasco also has an Asian-inspired hot sauce. Barramundi, the fresh water fish from Northern Australia, and a versatile and succulent, sweet and mild tasting fish favored by some of Chicago's premier chefs, had a strong presence at the Show. Another huge category of new products provides more options for diners with food allergies, such as a peanut-butter alternative of soy butter that can be used in Thai sauces and recipes that call for peanut butter; a non-dairy, cream substitute made from cashew and almonds that can be used in sauces, pastry, confections and frozen desserts; and a cheese and pine nut-free pesto.

The NRA Show is a definite must-see for anybody who is in the hospitality business. Check it out in 2008.





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## Cash in on the Mini Dessert Trend

As a foodservice operator you know that add-ons like appetizers, beverages, and desserts are the most profitable of your menu items, but can also be the most challenging to sell. Getting the dessert order at the end of a meal can oft times be the most difficult as research shows over 80% of consumers report being too full<sup>1</sup> and over 60% indicate that restaurant portions are too large.<sup>2</sup>

So how can you capture the high profit potential desserts offer while overcoming the number one objection: "I'd love to, but I'm just too full."? Enter the number one hottest menu item in America: bite-sized desserts.<sup>3</sup>

Offering guests the option to add just a few bite-sized add-ons to their after-dinner coffee order or a sampler platter of mini treats to share at the end of a meal answers their desire for sensible indulgence while offering tremendous incremental sales and profits for the operator.



Adding mini-dessert offerings also provides opportunity to capitalize on the expanding demand for snack, late night, and take out occasions brought on by the ever-increasing numbers of time-pressed, convenience-driven consumers.

McCain Foods® newly expanded line of Sweet Classics™ Desserts By the Bite offers 5 enticing varieties of crave-able mini desserts that are ideal for creating popular, versatile & profitable offerings sure to bring satisfaction for patron and operator alike.

Discover how you can cash in on the mini dessert trend with McCain's FREE "Mini Course. Major Profits." Dessert Guide. To order your FREE Dessert Guide, call 1-800-767-7377 or visit [www.mccainsweetclassics.com](http://www.mccainsweetclassics.com)

1. NPD Consumer Research Study, *Mini Desserts 2005*
2. *Restaurants & Institutions*, March 15, 2007
3. National Restaurant Association, *What's Hot & What's Not Chef Survey*, 2006



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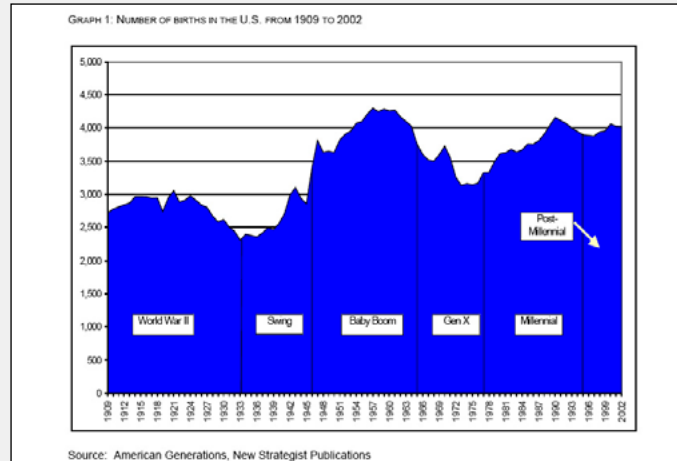
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## Unilever Foodsolutions Report on Boomers in the United States

Prepared by: *Charlie McConnell, Marketing Insights Manager, Unilever Foodsolutions*

The Boomer of today is ready to take over. They are done playing by everyone else's rules and are ready to start making their own set of rules, a set of rules they can break at any time. Plans are being made that put the focus back on them. They do not care that they are getting older; they see this as the prime of their life. But, hiding behind all the optimism are the constraints of a financial reality that is not as rosy as many would think.



So, in their new world, Boomers have to balance the ambition of their aspirations with the constraints of their bank accounts. It is in this reality that the Boomer looks to assert itself as the dominant generation of the 21st century.

Dominance for the Boomer will come mainly from one source – sheer size. Following World War II, birth rates skyrocketed in 1946 and the boom continued through 1964 (Chart 1). Now settled between the ages of 43 and 61, Boomers currently make up approximately 27% of the U.S. population, compared to only 18% of the population that is made up of the generations that preceded the Boomers,

<b>AFFLUENCE</b>	They have significant financial resources
<b>HEALTH &amp; WELLNESS</b>	They look for foods and experiences that will keep them strong and vital into their later years
<b>SOCIAL NETWORKING</b>	It is their propensity to be engaged with the outside world
<b>LIVE FOR TODAY</b>	Boomers love instant gratification
<b>SELF IMPROVEMENT</b>	They are always pushing to be better
<b>WORKING RETIREMENT</b>	They may choose to continue working (perhaps in a modified fashion)
<b>DESIRE FOR NEW EXPERIENCES</b>	The desire for new experiences has been a primary descriptor of this generation
<b>INDIVIDUALISM</b>	Personalization of products and services are key
<b>CONVENIENCE</b>	They value their time, thus value convenient solutions
<b>VALUE FOR THE MONEY</b>	Its not just low prices, it depends on their lifestyle and aspirations
<b>SAVVY &amp; INFORMATION HUNGRY</b>	Information sharing is something they value
<b>ETHICS &amp; ENVIRONMENTALISM</b>	Boomers respond to things and people that share their convictions and act on them

Source: 2007 Unilever Trip Management Report

the Swing and WWII generations. The only generation that comes close to matching the size of the Boomers is the Millennials, a group made up of the Boomers' children. With numbers like these, the Boomers have the size to shape the future of the U.S. socio-economic landscape.

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Foodservice is a key part of that socio-economic landscape as people aged 45-54 spend almost 6% of their income on food away from home, or over \$3,000 per person, per year. The performance in the foodservice industry in future years will, in large part, be driven by the behavior and attitudes of the Boomer generation. So, all parties whose success is dependant

on foodservice must learn as much as they can about the Boomer in order to meet and exceed this cohort's high expectations. The following details key expectations that foodservice operators need to know in order to capture this essential demographic group.

The attitudinal drivers of the Boomer can be summarized in 12 key areas identified in the Unilever Shopper Vision study, "Boomer Shoppers Today and Tomorrow: Following the Money."

Many of these (Chart 2) speak to the Boomer desire for self-actualization in the form of their relationships with others, their relationship with their environment, and their relationship with themselves. It's a constant need to make everything better and the thought that they have the power to do it themselves. Complacency and status quo are not in their vocabulary.

Building on the self empowerment that drives Boomers, the Unilever study speaks to Boomer mindset that they are just getting started in life. The last thing that defines a Boomer is their age. Instead, they view this time in their life as the opportunity to do all that they could not when they were younger or had kids in the home.

### What's Important To Me Personally

	Total	Echoes	Xers	Boomers	Matures
Being physically fit	50%	52%	49%	48%	54%
Paying a lot of attention to your appearance	31	34	30	28	35
Sticking to a diet	31	31	27	30	36
Being good looking	21	34	23	16	16
Looking stylish	19	30	20	14	16

Source: Yankelovich Monitor

6,7 on a 7-point scale where 7 = "Extremely Important"

### Current Involvement in Health-Related Activities by Age

	Total	Echoes	Xers	Boomers	Matures
Maintaining a healthy weight	45%	47%	42%	42%	49%
Reducing my stress level	38	31	37	41	40
Going to the doctor at least once a year	49	39	42	52	63
Having a healthy sex life	37	37	45	41	23
Keeping sweets I eat to a minimum	38	30	37	41	41
Going to the dentist twice a year	41	40	41	42	41
Reducing the fat in my diet	34	24	30	38	44
Watching my blood pressure	35	15	25	41	56
Watching my cholesterol	32	13	23	40	49
Making sure I get enough calcium	32	25	25	36	43
Eating high fiber foods	30	17	25	33	45
Using alcohol in moderation	30	21	30	33	32
Watching my daily caloric intake	25	18	21	29	29
Making sure I get enough antioxidants	20	10	17	21	31
Managing my arthritis pain	18	3	9	21	38

Source: Yankelovich

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While health and wellness and Boomers seem inextricably linked, it is interesting to note that the vitality Boomers seek is not superficial, it is more experiential. Looking at this data from Yankelovich (Chart 3), it shows that it is actually the Boomers kids that are most concerned about their appearance; Boomers simply want to have enough vigor to achieve the lofty goals they have set for themselves.

That vigor, however, will not be as easy to come by for the Boomer as it was fifteen years ago. Now, medical concerns are becoming more and more a part of the daily life of the Boomer. Chart 4 shows how health and diet concerns jump when you compare Echoes and Xers to Boomers and Matures. The other takeaway is that the health concerns for Boomers are only going to become more prominent in their lives as they reach age 65 and above. In particular, dietary concerns such as fat, cholesterol, calcium, and fiber will become a fact of everyday life.

Up until now, this report has focused on the positive outlook that the Boomer has for their future. But, the reality of it all is that it costs money to live and there is a great deal of uncertainty about the source of money going forward (Chart 5). The Boomer woman, in particular, is going to need to plan further down the line since life expectancy for women is greater than it is for men.

So, if we are to summarize what it means to be a Boomer in today's society, these are the bottom line:

1. Integrity is important.
2. Rule breaking is acceptable and encouraged.
3. They are always looking for new ways to win.
4. Forever Young!

Keeping these four factors in mind going forward, the foodservice operator can expect to see Boomers reward them by walking through their front door, aspirations in tow.

### Among Boomer Women

Description of current economic situation	2002	2006
Comfortable financially	46%	37%
Just have enough to get by	41	40
Have financial difficulties	13	20

### Among Women

Likelihood of what will be true about your life five years from now: I will be in better financial shape than I am now

Echoes	66%
Xers	55
Boomers	45
Matures	20

(Top 2 box on a 7-pt. scale where a 7 is "extremely likely")



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## In Honor Of National Hot Dog Month, Some Answers To Those Dogging Questions

July is National Hot Dog Month and a perfect time to highlight one of America's favorite foods.

Hot dogs, also known as frankfurters, franks or wieners can be made from beef, pork or poultry (turkey or chicken) or a combination of two or more of these meats. Seasonings include coriander, garlic, ground mustard, nutmeg, salt and pepper in proprietary blends that give each hot dog its characteristic flavor. Hot dogs come in different sizes (6, 7, 10 or 12 inches) as well as different counts per pound (4:1 means 4 hot dogs per lb, for example). Sometimes extenders (starches, flour, powdered meat proteins and vegetable proteins) are added to reduce costs. There are premium brands, such as Ball Park Franks®, that have no extenders. Be sure to check the label when comparing products with lower costs.



In 1959, the Detroit Tigers and Tiger Stadium were searching for the best hot dog to satisfy their demanding baseball fans. One premium hot dog was chosen because of its classic flavor and juicy texture – even after hours of grilling. Ball Park Franks were the hands-down favorite and continues to be a favorite with consumers everywhere. The makers of Ball Park Franks provided descriptions of some of their more popular varieties:

**Beef Frank.** This is a 7" plump, juicy frank naturally seasoned, hardwood smoked and no-char cook. Ideal for the roller grill.

**Chi Town Frank** is a 6" coarse ground beef frank with a hint of garlic and onion flavor.

**Grillmaster Beef Frank.** This 6" frank is coarser ground than regular Ball Park Franks with a bigger, bold Grillmaster taste.

**Meat Frank.** This is a plump, juicy beef, pork and turkey frank in a 6" variety.



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To take your hot dogs from basic to bountiful—and turn it into a profit opportunity—consider setting up a hot dog bar where patrons can choose their own toppings. Or print a menu clip-on or table tent that tempts the taste buds with ideas for upscaling their dog. For some fun and variety try these hot dog toppers as special summer additions to your menu:



### **Grilled Garden Topping**

Combine:

- Chopped tomato
- Black olive slices
- Cucumber
- Pickle relish
- Whole grain mustard or Grey Poupon
- Chopped avocado
- Red onion
- Alfalfa sprouts

### **Buffalo Blast Topping**

Combine:

- Chopped celery
- Tabasco® hot sauce
- Bleu cheese dressing

### **Santa Fe Frank**

Combine:

- 1 oz. Prepared black bean salsa
- 1/4 oz. Lettuce, shredded
- 1/2 oz. Pepper Jack cheese, shredded

See your sales representative for more delicious menu ideas and quality products.

Source: Sara Lee Foodservice



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## The "Wellness" Trend Creates New Opportunities For Chefs

More and more, today's restaurant patrons are becoming interested in "wellness" and are doing more to achieve it. But unlike diet fads that seem to come and go every few months, wellness has been a trend that started decades ago and continues to gain momentum today. As most experts define it, wellness is a holistic approach to one's life... a state of achieving balance among the physical, mental, and emotional sides of life. The result is that foodservice professionals are menuing more and more "healthy" items.

But perhaps even more interesting is the fact that operators are using the wellness trend to actually improve their menus. Many chefs are discovering new taste combinations that not only meet the wellness criteria, they actually provide patrons with exciting new fare. Items like crab and avocado omelets are attracting all patrons, regardless of the fact that the omelets are made with cholesterol-free eggs.



Companies like Papetti's have been on the forefront of the wellness trend since the beginning, and offer their customers a wide range of tasty, yet healthy, egg products, all of which are salmonella, listeria, and E. coli negative. A perfect example is Papetti's Better'n Eggs®, a refrigerated liquid egg substitute that contains no fat or cholesterol. The product, made with 100% real eggs, defies the perception that "healthy" has to taste marginal. In fact, in 2007 it received the ChefsBest™ Best Taste Award – an award given by a team of independent, professional chefs in a blind taste test.

But Papetti's wellness offerings don't stop with just one SKU. The company also offers Better'n Eggs® precooked patties and omelets, and AllWhites® -- 100% egg whites in refrigerated cartons. Those who bake will love the company's Froze'n Ready® egg whites and Easy Eggs® Whites, both of which have added whipping agents.

Finally, Papetti's also produces Table Ready® French Toast and French Toast Sticks, both of which are made with whole grains. Whole grains have been shown to reduce the risks of heart disease, stroke, cancer, and obesity.

Bottom line? Today's healthier products open up a whole new world of creativity to chefs who are interested in serving their wellness-seeking patrons healthier fare without sacrificing the main reason consumers are eating at their establishments in the first place: great tasting food.



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## Cobbler with Rich Shortcake Topping

Serves 4 to 6

### Topping:

- 1 c all purpose flour
- 1 ½ tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- 4 tbsp unsalted butter, chilled, cut into ¼-inch pieces
- 2 tbsp vegetable shortening, chilled
- 6 tbsp milk

### Filling:

- 2 pt fresh blueberries (or 24 ounces frozen)
- 2 tsp cornstarch
- 2/3 c sugar
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp vanilla

### Optional Filling:

- 1 ¾ lb pears, peeled, cored, and cut into thick slices
- 2 tsp cornstarch
- ½ c sugar
- ¼ tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp vanilla extract



1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

2. Mix flour, baking powder, and salt in workbowl of Robot Coupe. Scatter butter pieces over mixture, tossing to coat butter with dry ingredients. Cut butter into dry ingredients with five pulses, 1 second each. Add vegetable shortening; continue cutting in until flour is pale yellow and resembles coarse cornmeal, with butter bits no larger than small peas, about four more 1-second pulses. Turn mixture into medium bowl.

3. Pour 6 tablespoons milk into flour mixture. Mix with rubber spatula until large clumps form. Turn mixture onto work surface; lightly knead until mixture just comes together.

4. Scrape fruit mixture into baking pan. Drop pieces of dough over fruit.

5. Bake until golden brown, 45 to 55 minutes.

Source: Chef Kurt Struwe, Southwest Minnesota State University



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## Myth: Cash Is The Best Choice For A Motivational Award.

If you ask participants about the awards they prefer, chances are they'll choose cash over tangible awards. But will cash truly motivate them to work harder and achieve more?

Participants may say yes, but the facts say no.

Fact: Cash is not best at driving performance. In fact, it can weaken your performance-improvement initiatives, both in the short and long terms.

Cash works wonderfully as compensation to pay your employees for services rendered. However, if your goal is to induce specific behavior or recognize top performers for their extra effort and achievement, and motivate them to do it again, then tangible awards work best.



Here are the leading reasons why cash will clash with your performance-improvement objectives:

Cash is perceived as income: Cash is all-too-easily confused with compensation, which is linked to security, not recognition. Even though your participants earn extra cash in performance-improvement programs, they'll soon begin to consider it an entitlement. If you cut the program, participants will perceive it as a pay cut. If you continue it, they'll view the cash as expected income - not an extra award due to top performance.

Cash is used to meet basic needs, not fulfill dreams: People use cash to pay bills and buy necessities - not to reward themselves with something special. Guilt often prevents the perceived "selfish" spending of cash on superfluous items, whereas tangible awards are enjoyed guilt-free! Remember: It's critical that your participants feel rewarded for their achievements. If they don't, their motivation will suffer eventually - as will the success of your performance-improvement initiative.

Cash has no trophy value: People are reluctant to discuss their monetary income with colleagues and friends. If you reward top performers with cash, chances are few of the other people you hope to motivate will learn about it. Because your top performers will not show off their awards, they won't receive the emotional - and motivational - benefit of peer recognition. And you'll miss out on a valuable opportunity to promote the rewards of top performance in your organization.

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Cash is not memorable: When cash goes into the bank or is used to buy groceries, how long do you think it's remembered? Which is more inspiring for future performance - a magical trip to Disneyland or a paid-up utility bill? Unlike tangible awards, cash has no lasting, emotional value to spur motivation and goal setting.

Cash is taxed at its full value: Your participants must pay tax upon receipt of the cash award, and this tax is figured at 100% of the award's total value. Tangible award media, on the other hand, is taxed at about 60%.



### The Right Choice

To fully understand why tangible rewards work better than cash, you have to understand a bit about the human brain. The right hemisphere of the brain is the home of human emotion and is the dominant driver of behavior.

Only the right hemisphere is capable of creative visualization; the left hemisphere is not.

Tangible awards (merchandise, travel, and recognition items with no explicit, publicized monetary value) are visualized as images by the right brain. Participants imagine the trip they've always dreamed about; the perfect furniture they've always wanted; the romantic gift for a special someone.

Cash awards are processed as nuts-and-bolts financial transactions by the left brain - and no inspirational images result. When awards are visualized, an emotional connection occurs. And this emotional connection helps drive motivation. The result is simple: Cash invokes no image - and little emotion; tangible awards do just the opposite. It's no surprise that tangible awards are the more powerful and enduring motivators in a performance-improvement program.

### Make It Personal

To recognize exceptional performance, it's best to make it personal. Just as a hand-selected gift has more meaning than a hastily written check, tangible awards connote sincere thanks and appreciation. Performance is not about money. It's about pride, and self-esteem, and personal growth and satisfaction. Remember: Your operation's goals must become your participants' personal goals. Only then will you both succeed. Your extraordinary performers deserve extraordinary recognition - and only tangible awards can give it to them.

*Note: Taxable values are determined by sponsoring companies. Operator's Edge does not offer tax advice. This figure is representative of many operation's sponsors' decisions on the taxable basis of rewards.*

Source: [FoodserviceRewards.com](#)



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## Restaurant Marketing and PR Tactics for 2007

Dining has become one of the most common forms of entertainment. This means a world of opportunities for restaurant marketing and public relations in 2007. Quantified Marketing Group shares their list of some of the newest tactics that restaurants will be using this year.

### 1. Web and interactive marketing

The use of Web and interactive marketing has increased drastically, evidenced by the popularity of Blogging, Podcasts and YouTube video posts. Burger King's popular Subservient Chicken site was one of the first Web campaigns to prove that interactive marketing can be successful for restaurants.



### 2. More viral campaigns

Buzz marketing, word-of-mouth campaigns, and 'stories' will be a big part of restaurant public relations this year.

When Starbucks sent a car around Washington D.C. with a coffee cup stuck on the roof, it handed out \$5 coupons to "good Samaritans" who notified the driver. This campaign not only created a buzz around town but also received plenty of media coverage, both locally and nationally.

### 3. Increased PR budgets

Mass-media advertising is becoming less effective for many smaller restaurants because they can't compete with the larger chains. As a result, many will start dedicating more of their marketing mix budget toward public relations, spending more than the old standard of 5%.

### 4. Larger-than-life PR events

Everything from larger-than-life blow-up figures to wacky stunts will be used by those who have the budget to support it.

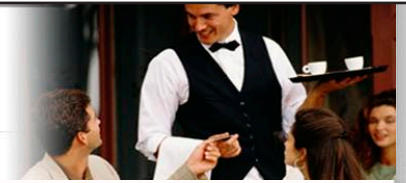
### 5. Environmental marketing

Marketing and branding are now being incorporated into every aspect of the dining experience. As a result, in 2007, more departments (i.e. culinary and construction) will be reporting to the marketing department.

### 6. Niche marketing

Hispanics are the fastest-growing minority group in the nation. In 2007 many restaurants will be catering to this demographic by offering authentic Hispanic menu choices, family-oriented promotions and Spanish-language advertisements, in addition to targeting public relations efforts toward Hispanic television and community newspapers.

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### 7. Marketing to those who eat at home

Many families are looking for ways to eat together at the dinner table but just don't have the time to create a home-cooked meal. As a result, restaurants will be offering curbside pickup, catering, delivery, meal-assembly services and other time-saving home-meal replacement options.

### 8. Limited-time offers

Keep an eye out for limited-time offers featuring bolder flavors and ethnic influences. This is a great way to try new items before adding them permanently to the menu.

### 9. Brands with more personality

Fun, humorous and irreverent will become words that guests use to describe their favorite restaurants in 2007. As consumers look to dining as a form of entertainment more and more, restaurants will strive to provide an experience for guests, not just a meal. A restaurant's personality will play a big part of the overall dining experience, as well as help establish its brand.

One way to try promotional efforts is by using occasions and holidays. Here are some Awareness Holidays for you to keep in mind as you consider ideas for promotional themes:

#### January

- New Year's Day
- National Pizza Week
- Nat'l. Prune Breakfast Month
- National Fiber Focus Month
- Chinese New Year
- Oatmeal Month
- School Nurse Day

#### February

- American Heart Month
- California Kiwi Day
- Groundhog Day
- Black History Month
- Mardi Gras
- Valentine's Day
- National Cherry Month
- Nat'l. Pancake Week
- President's Day

#### March

- National Nutrition Month
- National Peanut Month
- St. Patrick's Day and Irish Heritage Month
- National Noodle Month
- Nat'l. Alcohol Awareness Month
- Nat'l. Frozen Food Month
- Women's History Month

#### April

- Cancer Control Month
- Earth day
- Good Friday
- Nat'l. High Blood Pressure Month
- World Health Day
- April Fool Day
- Administrative Professionals Day and Week
- National Garden Week
- Easter

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# Operator's Edge<sup>SM</sup>

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### May

- National Barbecue Month
- National Egg Month
- National Salad Month
- Cinco de Mayo
- Teacher Appreciation Week
- Mother's Day
- National Nurses Week
- National Police Week
- Memorial Day
- Nat'l. Physical Fitness Month
- Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month

### June

- National Beef Steak Month
- National Dairy Month
- Turkey Lovers' Month
- National Papaya Month
- National Candy Month
- National Soul Food Month
- World Environment Day
- Flag Day
- Father's Day
- National Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Month

### July

- Nat'l. Baked Bean Month
- National Ice Cream Month
- National Picnic Month
- Cell Phone Courtesy Month
- National Culinary Arts Month
- National Hot Dog Month
- Parent's Day
- 4th of July/Independence Day
- Nat'l. Osteoporosis Prevention Month
- Nat'l. July Belongs to Blueberries Month

### August

- Nat'l. Water Quality Month
- National Clown Week
- Weird Contest Week
- National Resurrect Romance Week

### September

- National Rice Month
- National Chicken Month
- Labor Day
- International Literacy Day
- National Grandparents Day
- Rosh Hashana
- Yom Kippur
- Sukkot
- Nat'l. Cholesterol Education Month
- Nat'l. Food Safety Education Month
- Nat'l. Hispanic Heritage Month
- Nat'l. 5-a-Day for Better Health Week

### October

- Child Health Month
- Family Health Month
- World Vegetarian Day
- World Food Day Celebration
- National School Lunch Week
- Customer Service Week
- National Boss Day
- Make a Difference Day
- Halloween
- Nat'l. Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Polish American Heritage Month

### November

- National Diabetes Month
- National Split Pea Soup Week
- Thanksgiving
- Veteran's Day
- Great American Smokeout
- World Aids Day
- Nat'l. American Indian Heritage Month

### December

- Chanukah
- Christmas

Sources: Quantified Marketing Group, University of Massachusetts/Amherst, [www.epromos.com](http://www.epromos.com)