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THE IMPORTANCE OF ONLINE MARKETING

The hardest part of marketing a new restaurant is starting from zero. More likely than not, you will have no brand recognition and you'll need to build equity piece by piece. First impressions matter, but so do the methods in which potential customers come across your business. Long gone are the days where you can rely solely on newspaper announcements and pedestrians passing by your newly opened restaurant. In order to keep up with the times, you'll have to adapt to modern internet marketing tactics like leveraging search engines, hosting events, maintaining email lists, and fostering partnerships.

This part of the book will cover the following marketing channels and tactics:

- Organic search & local SEO
- Pay-per-click (including paid search)
- Instagram
- Other social media
- Email newsletters
- Events
- Early adopters
- Marketing collateral
- Partnerships

7.

PAID VS. ORGANIC MARKETING

Generally speaking, marketing efforts can be divided into two buckets: paid and organic.

Paid marketing requires an ongoing budget, and typically, you pay based on its reach (how many people see your advertisements) or based on engagement (how many people click on them). Once you deplete or relinquish your budget, so too does your visibility dissipate. This includes (but is not limited to) tactics such as paid search, Facebook/Instagram ads, banners, and sponsored Yelp listings.

On the other hand, organic (or non-paid) marketing does not require ongoing budget and the benefits of these efforts can last indefinitely. This includes strategies like search engine optimization (SEO), publishing posts on social media platforms like Twitter/Facebook/Instagram, reviews you've received, and any mentions in publications that you did not pay for (all collectively referred to as "earned").

Which type of marketing do you need?

For best results, you'll want a mix of both types in order to craft the most comprehensive marketing strategy. You should consider organic tactics as your baseline level of marketing - *e.g.* make changes to your website so people can find you in Google; monitor what people say to/about you on Facebook and Yelp; build up your email userbase.

However, many of these strategies take time - which is when paid marketing is indispensable. As soon as you hit the right

levers and buttons, your ads will go live and you'll immediately start getting eyeballs on your content. For instance, bid high enough on Google for the term "pizza in Midtown NYC," and you'll be somewhere near the top of their search results page within the ad space. Pay for sponsored listings on Yelp or Seamless, and again, you'll show up first when nearby people perform searches. Want to gain Instagram followers or get more likes for your "food porn" photos? Then pay for an ad campaign that targets the local foodie cohort.

The best way to think about it: your organic marketing strategy is how you want to be positioned in the long term, whereas your paid marketing strategy is how you can hit the ground running. Paid search can also help you acquire customers that you otherwise wouldn't be able to get in front of. Of course, with a properly integrated marketing strategy, you can use paid media to gain long term organic users (paying for ads that drive people to sign up for your mailing list, for example), but those are advanced tactics that require hands-on consultation.

Note that there is some grey area when you pay for an online service (such as MailChimp for email marketing). In these cases, the service is not amplifying your reach, so strictly speaking, it's not a paid media channel. The dollars go toward maintaining your database of users. For the sake of simplicity, I would classify email marketing as an organic tactic with monthly overhead. Likewise, paying for website hosting would not be a paid marketing strategy.