O tock

SHOW UP WHERE IT MATTERS:

7 Strategies to Get Your Restaurant Discovered in 2024



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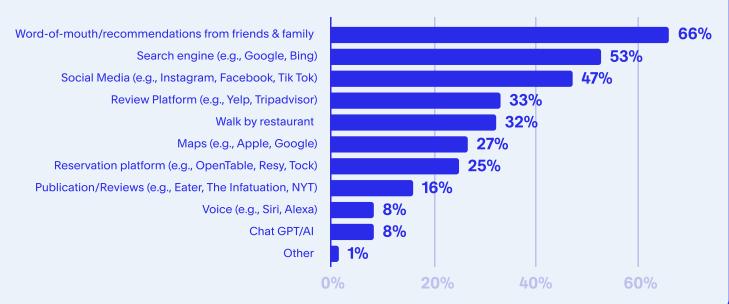
Today, being discovered by potential guests is key to filling your tables and tasting rooms. But how do you stand out in a crowded market? For many, this can seem like a challenging task.

This guide aims to demystify the process of getting noticed. By delving into seven key strategies, we'll show you how to position your business for discovery, detailing the necessary steps and associated costs. From fostering word of mouth to maximizing social media engagement and ensuring your business shines in search results, our goal is to provide a highly effective and cost-efficient ways to get your business discovered by a wider breadth of guests.

Consumer Research

To understand how guests discover restaurants today, Tock surveyed US consumers who have dined at a restaurant with a reservation in the last 90 days.

Results indicate that diners discover restaurants in a wide variety of places. Perhaps not surprisingly, word of mouth is the leading way they learn about new restaurants, underscoring the value guests place on the recommendations of friends and family. However, digital channels, including search engines, social media, and review sites, play pivotal roles in this journey. Interestingly, the trend of turning to AI platforms like Chat GPT for restaurant discovery is rising.

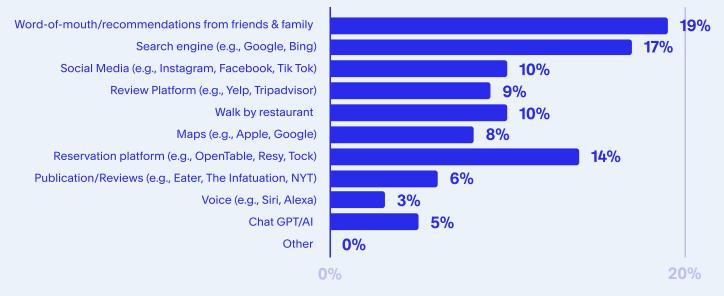


How do you discover restaurants?

¹ US consumers who have dined at a restaurant with a reservation in last 90 days; n = 270; evenly distributed across age and gender, SurveyMonkey, 2024

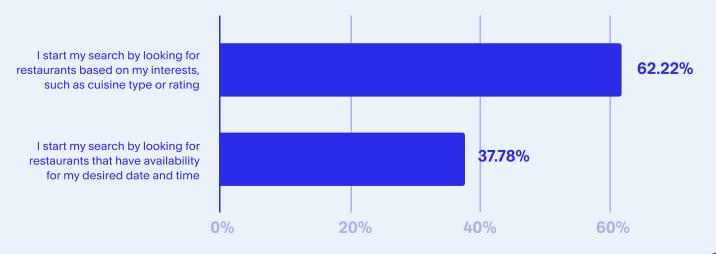
When asked about their primary way to discover restaurants when they need a reservation, some diners trade word of mouth recommendations (19%) for a wide range of digital tools including search (17%), social (10%), review sites (9%), maps (8%), and reservation platforms (14%).

What is the primary way you discover restaurants when you need a reservation?



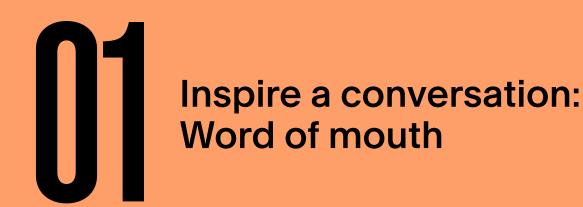
Our survey suggests that diners rely on word of mouth and other digital channels to discover restaurants because they prioritize finding a restaurant that interests them over availability.

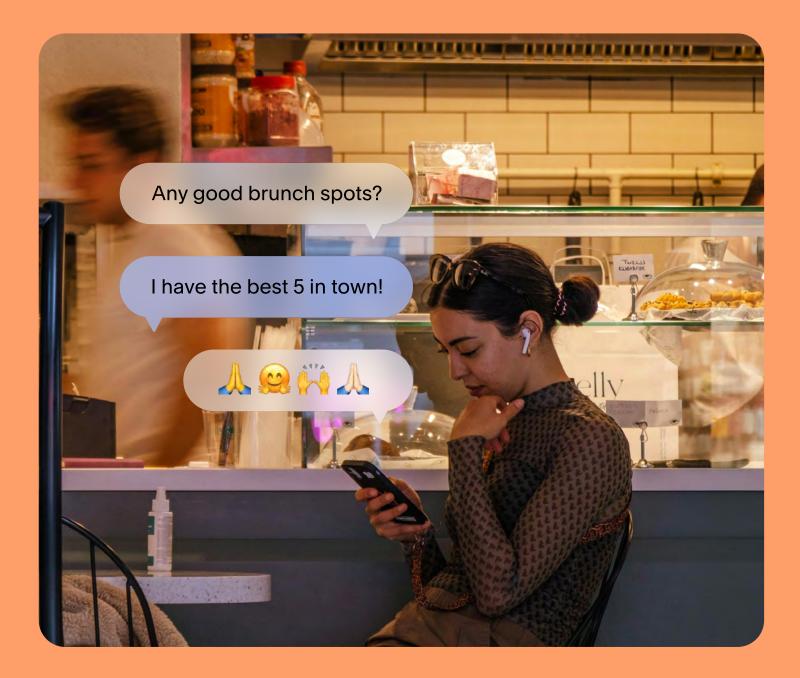
When searching for restaurants that require a reservation, what is your primary starting point?



These survey results provide insight into how you can improve the discovery of your business and drive more covers—and doing so can be both easy and low-cost.

Let's explore how to ensure your establishment shows up where it matters.





Word of mouth marketing is the cornerstone of any successful hospitality marketing strategy, and it's where every business should begin.

Word of mouth is the process of turning your guests into advocates for your brand—proactively or when a friend asks for a recommendation. Word of mouth may be sparked in many ways, from delivering exceptional hospitality to creating memorable dining experiences.

How to make an impact

Craft memorable experiences

Lean into your brand to craft experiences that intrigue and engage guests. Whether it's a signature dish, a class, or a tasting, focus on what you do best to encourage conversation and recommendations.

Offer exceptional hospitality

Exceptional hospitality can spark word of mouth recommendations. For example, noting a guest's wine preference or accommodating unique dietary requests are examples of personalized care that transform a simple meal into a shareable moment. Tock makes this seamless with guest notes and tags.

Maintain quality and consistency

Guests are more inclined to recommend establishments where they've consistently had positive experiences.

Tell your story

Sharing the unique backstory of your restaurant or winery on popular social platforms such as Instagram can foster a deeper emotional bond with guests. This connection makes them more inclined to recount their experiences, amplifying word of mouth promotion where your audience engages.

Pursuing word of mouth as a discovery strategy:

Cost

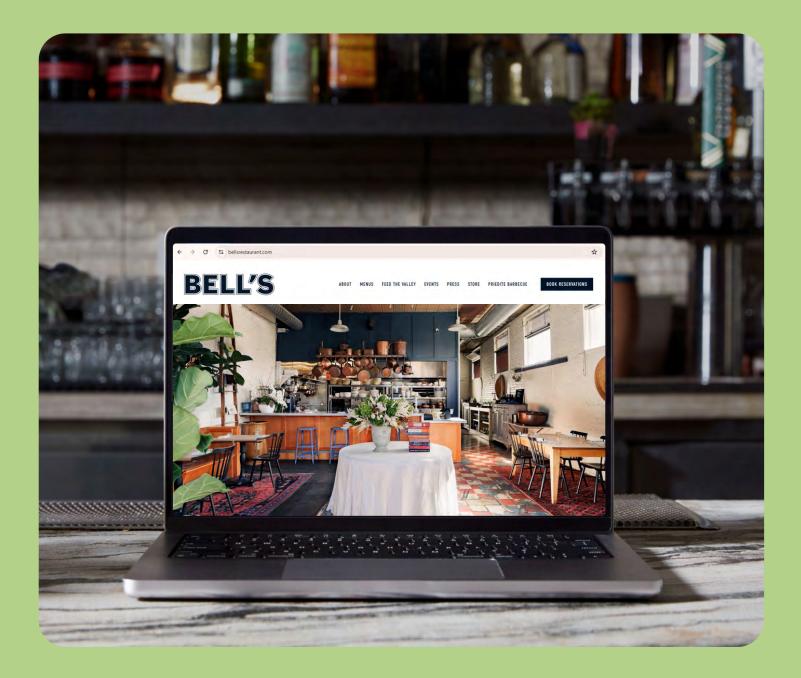
Generally low to no marketing cost.

Factors Influencing Cost

Sparking word of mouth can be a cost-effective discovery strategy in the hospitality industry, often incurring minimal to no direct marketing expenses. The primary investment lies in delivering exceptional service and curating unique dining experiences.



Extend your brand online: A digital front door



Your online presence should feel like an extension of your physical space and brand.

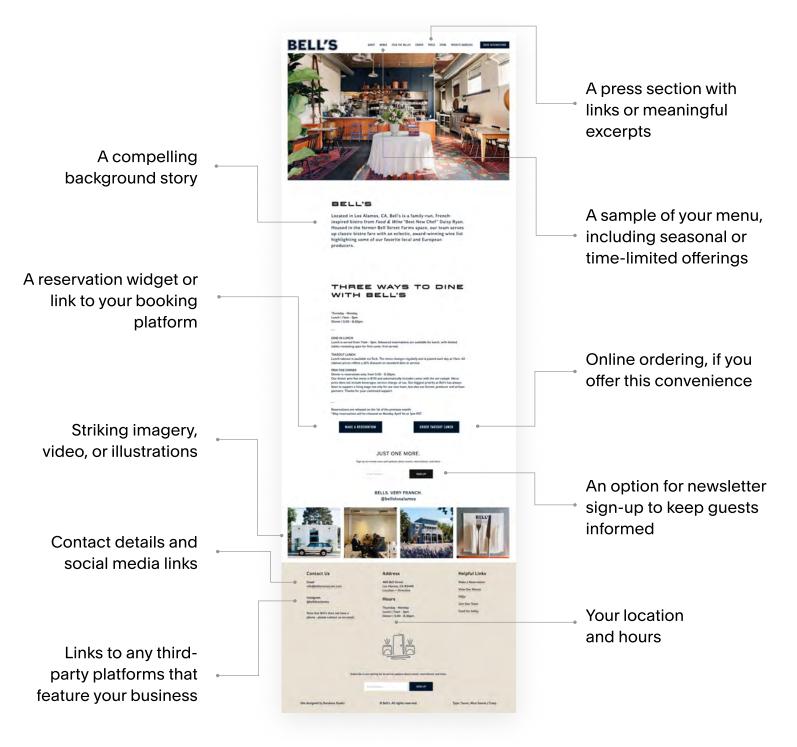
Make your website enticing by using high-quality imagery and content. Keep your design simple and user-friendly, ensuring your site loads quickly and displays the personality of your business.



☆ INSPIRING BRANDS

St. Lawrence Website \rightarrow Valley Bar and Bottle Website \rightarrow Gary's Website \rightarrow

What your website might include:



① TOCK TIP Squarespace offers versatile website templates for all hospitality providers and businesses.

To attract new guests, optimize your website for both the user experience and search engines (SEO).

Here's how you can boost your site's traffic and engagement

Go mobile

Ensure your site is mobile-friendly, as many guests will visit it on their smartphones.

Optimize for local SEO

Local SEO is essential for any hospitality establishment. Be sure to include your restaurant's contact information across all website pages.

Optimize for speed

Manage file sizes and minimize unnecessary plugins.

Integrate with social media

Embedding social media feeds or adding links to your profiles can increase the website's engagement and help build a community around your brand. It provides a pathway for visitors to follow, like, and share your content.

Refresh content

Regularly updating your website with high-quality, relevant content, including new menus, announcements, or fresh imagery, not only keeps your audience engaged but also reminds the search engines that your site is active, which can positively affect your rankings.

Building a website as a discovery tool:

Cost Low to medium.

Factors Influencing Cost

Initial expenses for domain purchase and basic setup are relatively low. A new Squarespace website is provided for free with a Premium or Premium Unlimited Tock subscription.

Costs can rise if you rely on professional photography or bespoke menu design. Borrowing or renting a good camera works as well as it provides the opportunity to capture special moments on any given night. Utilizing Squarespace's intuitive website templates and managing updates in-house can help control costs while ensuring your site effectively represents your brand online.

Naximize visibility:
Google Business Profiles



Once you launch or refine a website, it's time to broaden your reach.

Maximizing visibility is more than just having an online presence—it's about being discovered where potential guests are searching.

That's where your Google Business Profile comes into play it's a digital billboard for your restaurant or winery on Google and Google Maps. Given that these platforms are often the first stop for curious diners, a well-optimized profile can significantly boost your visibility, convey vital information, and attract more guests.

Why Google Business Matters

Imagine a potential guest searching for the perfect dining spot or winery in your area. With an optimized Google Business Profile, your establishment could be one of the top recommendations they see.

3 HELPFUL LINK Claim your Business Profile on Google →

Simple Steps to Stand Out

Claim your profile

Claim your Google Business listing and optimize it with accurate information, photos, and announcements.

Craft a compelling description

Use clear, engaging language to share what makes your business unique. Remember to weave in relevant keywords about your business and offerings to improve local search ranking. For starters, use a combination of high-intent words like the type of cuisine and location, niche descriptors that reflect your unique offering, and words that reflect your brand, including your restaurant name.

Showcase your best features

From special dishes to unique experiences, include as many attributes as possible to paint a complete picture of what you offer.

Keep your information up-to-date

Reliable information impacts customer decisions. Make sure your business hours and address are accurate, especially during holidays.

Be sure to add visual appeal

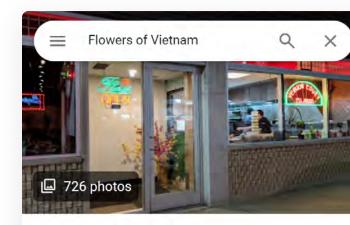
Upload a variety of high-quality images. Photos can make your profile more inviting and give potential guests a taste of what's in store.

Make your menu accessible

Your menu should be easy to find and up-to-date. A sample menu can work if you frequently change your offerings.

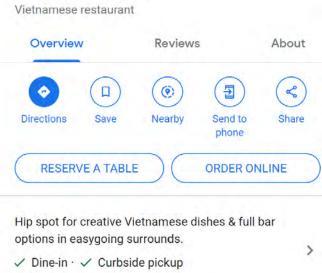
Post updates

Post about special events and experiences, or make announcements in the 'Recent updates' section.



Flowers of Vietnam

4.6 ★★★★★ (665) · \$\$



✓ No-contact delivery

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4440 Vernor Hwy, Detroit, MI 48209

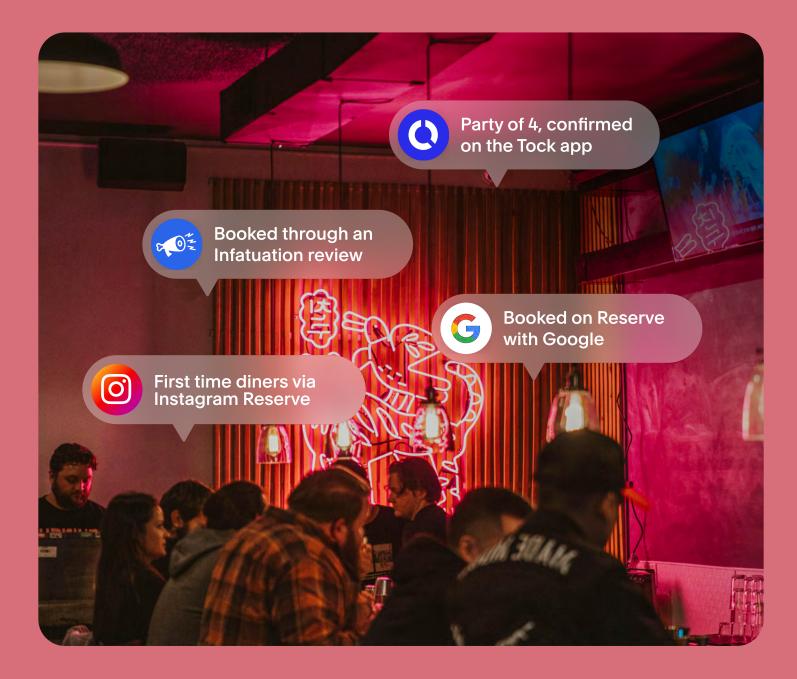
Building out a Google Business Profile

Cost Free to medium.

Factors Influencing Cost

Leveraging a Google Business Profile has a free base offering that includes listing your location, hours, and reviews. Additional optimization services such as access to advanced analytics are available for various budgets.

Enable reservations across the web: Partnerships and integrations

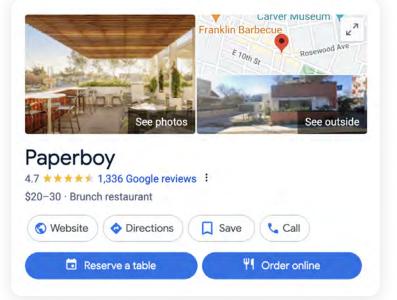


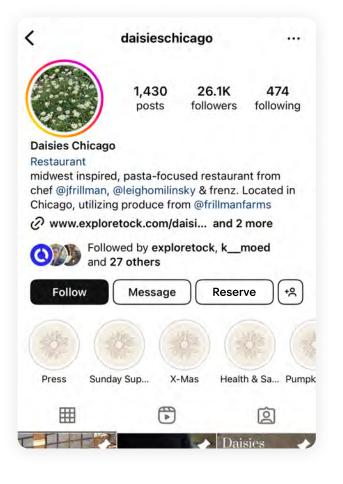
While leveraging Google Business is a solid foundation for enhancing your online presence, expanding your visibility across the digital landscape allows guests to book from a range of platforms.

For any hospitality establishment, managing integrations with the myriad of potential partners can take time and effort. Tock offers a comprehensive solution beyond a mere booking system; it facilitates seamless integrations with platforms and publications, including Reserve with Google, Instagram, Michelin, and The Infatuation, simplifying the process and broadening your exposure.

These partnerships place your business in front of a wide breadth of people, broadening your reach and distributing the reservation process. It's a strategic move that can boost bookings and foster repeat business, ultimately contributing to your establishment's growth.

Tock's Reserve with Google integration allows visitors to book free reservations directly from your Google Business Profile. This seamless connection between your online presence and booking capability encourages discovery and booking through Google Search and Maps.





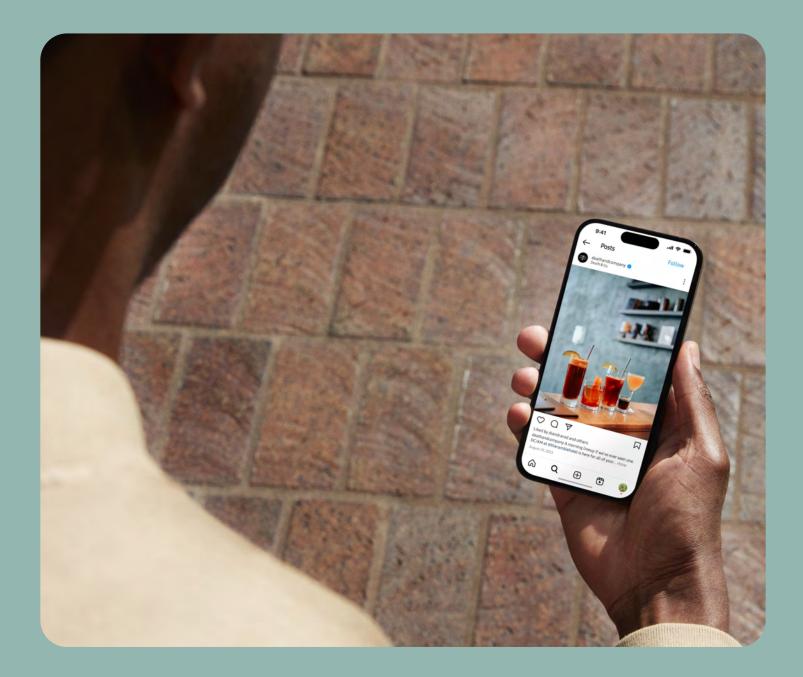
Tock's integration with Instagram enables businesses to simply activate their "Reserve" button, allowing guests to book reservations directly from this social media platform.

Building out partnerships and integrations

Cost

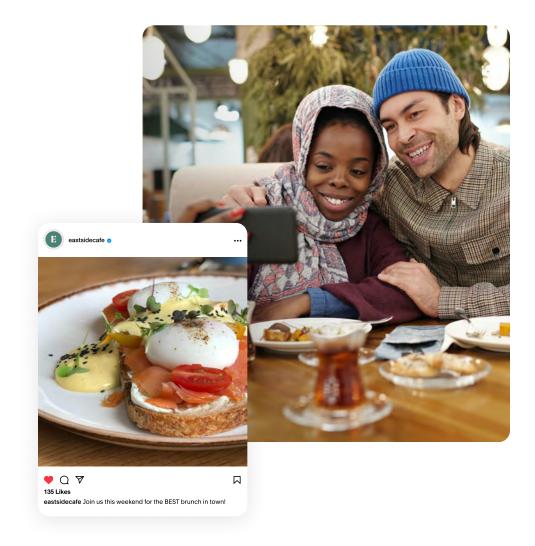
Available integrations are free with a Tock reservation subscription.

UDD Cultivate community: The power of social media



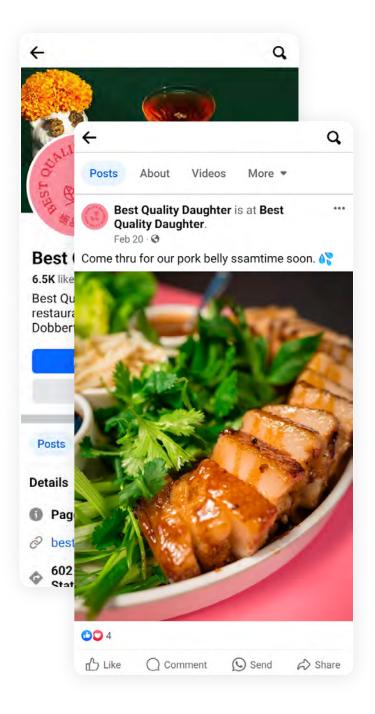
Now that you have built a foundational website and Google Business Profile, focus on building your social following.

Social media is a key channel for discovery; leveraging it can dramatically increase your discovery, bookings, repeat visits, and overall buzz. Let's dive into how you can make social media work for you.



Choosing social platforms right for your brand

In enhancing discoverability, the aim on every social platform is to boost your business's visibility and allure. By tailoring your content and engagement strategies to each platform's strengths, you can effectively improve your online presence, attract new guests, and build a loyal community around your brand.



facebook

The Community Builder

Facebook is ideal for connecting with your local community. It's a platform where engaging photos, event updates, and special offers thrive. Post across various community or group pages where your content is relevant.

① ENGAGEMENT TIP

Regularly interact with your followers by responding to comments and messages. Interactions build a sense of community and loyalty around your brand.

☆ INSPIRING BRANDS

Best Quality Daughter Facebook \rightarrow Musang Facebook \rightarrow



Instagram

The Visual Storyteller

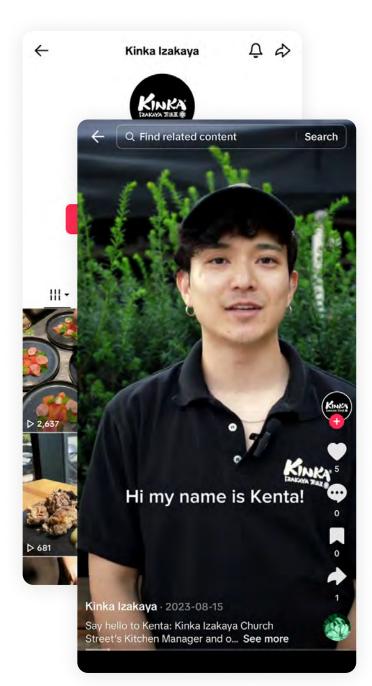
Use this platform to share the visual story of your restaurant or winery. Carousel posts, which allow you to share multiple images in a single post, and Reels, for short-form video content, have been shown to engage audiences effectively.

① ENGAGEMENT TIP

Utilize Instagram Stories to share timely updates, promote specials, and interact with your audience through polls and questions. These actions can increase engagement and make your followers feel involved.

☆ INSPIRING BRANDS

 $\frac{\text{Death \& Co Instagram } \rightarrow}{\text{Miss Crispy Rice Instagram } \rightarrow}$



J TikTok

The Authentic Entertainer

TikTok's rise in popularity, especially among younger diners, offers a unique opportunity to showcase the more authentic side of your business. User-generated content (UGC) and behind-the-scenes videos perform well here, offering a glimpse into actual experiences at your establishment.

① ENGAGEMENT TIP

Encourage your customers to share their experiences on TikTok and tag your business. Reposting UGC can significantly boost your credibility and reach.

☆ INSPIRING BRANDS

<u>Kinka Izakaya TikTok \rightarrow </u> <u>The Alchemist Kitchen & Bar TikTok \rightarrow </u>

Amplifying your brand presence on social media

The next step is to maximize each platform's potential to enhance your brand's online presence. It's crucial to be present and actively engage with your audience.

How to get the most out of your channels

Prompt engagement from followers

Encourage your followers to share their thoughts on your posts. Sharing not only boosts engagement but makes your audience feel connected.

Stay authentic

Your social media content should reflect your brand's personality and values. Finding an authentic voice helps build trust and loyalty among your audience.

Highlight guest experiences

Use your platform to showcase guest stories and feedback. Sharing provides social proof and encourages more engagement from your community.

Keep your followers informed

Communicate new offerings, events, or promotions. Keeping your audience informed helps keep your brand at the forefront of their minds.

Optimize your profiles

Make sure all of your social media profiles are complete and up-to-date with essential information about your business.

Post with a regular cadence

A content calendar can help you plan and ensure a steady stream of engaging posts.

By embracing social media, you can articulate your brand's story, foster meaningful interactions with followers, and enhance discoverability across platforms.

Building out social media

Cost Low to medium.

Factors Influencing Cost

Primary costs stem from content creation and community management. Keeping these tasks in-house can minimize expenses, but outsourcing content creation or engaging influencers may lead to higher costs.

Observe and a set of the set of



Platforms like Yelp and Tripadvisor, as well as Google Business and Facebook, help you manage reviews and gain broader visibility in market. Not surprisingly, positive reviews can significantly influence guest decisions.

Claim your profile on these platforms and manage the information displayed about your restaurant. Guests can find your business by searching for specific amenities, such as "Outdoor Seating" or "Dogs Allowed."

① ENGAGEMENT TIP

Prompt happy customers to leave reviews by reminding them at the end of their visit or through follow-up emails.

Being present on a review site

Cost Free and up.

Factors Influencing Cost

Listing your restaurant is usually free, but advertising or promoting your listing to increase visibility can involve costs.



Stay ahead of the curve: ChatGPT and AI

You

Please plan a 3 day food itinerary in Seattle.

Copilot

Certainly! Seattle is a vibrant city with a rich culinary scene. Whether you're a coffee aficionado, seafood lover, or craving international flavors, there's something for everyone. Here's a delightful **3-day food itinerary** to make the most of your visit:

Day 1: Ballard and Waterfront Views

 Breakfast at The Fat Hen: Begin your day in Ballard v breakfast at The Fat Hen. Try their Dutch baby pancal house-made granola.

How can I help you today?

best 5 sushi spots in san francisco?

This guide would not be complete without acknowledging the emerging influence of ChatGPT and AI in recommending hospitality establishments and experiences.

While ChatGPT is not a primary channel for discovery yet, it's important to note how discovery is changing. Just as diners and wine enthusiasts turn to the internet to find their next great experience, Bing's Copilot, an AI-powered web chat, scours the web to suggest the best spots or puts together an entire weekend itinerary. The key to catching the eye of both your future customers and these AI systems lies in your online activity and the buzz around your establishment.

The good news is that activities that drive discoverability in AI also drive visibility in their own right, such as creating memorable experiences, optimizing your online profiles and website, and staying active on social media.

Pursuing ChatGPT as a discovery strategy

Cost Low to no cost

Factors Influencing Cost

Few, as you're probably doing these activities regardless to drive visibility in their own right.

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To learn more about using Tock at your business visit <u>exploretock.com/join</u>.

To learn more about restaurant discoverability, visit <u>exploretock.com/</u> join/restaurant-marketing-discovery/.