



10 Online Contest Ideas for Restaurants

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Restaurant marketing is extremely competitive which is why brands are turning to online contest ideas for restaurants to help them stand out. There are likely dozens of restaurant competitors in a given area and they are all essentially fighting for the same customers: hungry diners.

If you're looking to help your restaurant beat the competition when it comes to sales and customer loyalty, these social media contest ideas for restaurants will help you get started. Read on to learn how to delight your restaurant guests with restaurant contest prizes, and the necessary contest marketing planning and preparation steps you need to create these contest ideas for restaurants.

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IN THIS ARTICLE:

- How do you attract restaurant customers to your contest?
- What are contest marketing goals for restaurants?
- How do you promote a restaurant with an online contest?

via [GIPHY](#)

Why Do Restaurants Run Social Media Contests?

Online contests for restaurants generate leads for your restaurant business and instant orders. This is why it's a good idea to run a contest that gets customers to interact with you on all platforms from social media to your restaurant mobile app, email marketing, [SMS marketing](#) and more. The engagement of a multi-channel restaurant social media contests also depends on contest advertising, both organic and through paid contest advertising.

via [GIPHY](#)

Running restaurant contest during high sales volume days such as holidays, social media contest ideas can help increase brand awareness, customer order value, and specific restaurant social media contest KPIs that you wish to set for your campaign.

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5 Steps to Prepare Your Restaurant for an Online Contest

There are many things that marketers can do to optimize restaurant social media contests. However, you also need to prepare your restaurant for a high volume of orders. Here's what you should do before your online contest for a restaurant goes live:

via [GIPHY](#)

? Step #1: Improve Your Food Photography Before You Plan a Restaurant Contest

When deciding to order food, customers focus on the visuals first. What ultimately shapes the sales volume that you generate from a restaurant contest will depend on how well you've optimized your online delivery menus and restaurant reservation app, and restaurant website food photography.

via [GIPHY](#)

Food Photography for Restaurants Creates the First Brand Impression for Guests

Well-done food photos leave customers with little doubt about the quality of your food and get them excited about ordering from a website or app. Food photography also makes your restaurant's offerings more memorable.

While restaurant contest participants are less likely to order during your contest if they are new customers, a discount or coupon shared with contest participants combined with your food photography can give them the push they need to try it out for the first-time.

via [GIPHY](#)

High Quality Food Photography for Contest Advertising

You should also consider incorporating your food photography into the contest advertising. It can serve a dual purpose to remind existing customers to place an order and it will also attract participants to your social media contest for restaurants. Advertising videography is also a unique way to help customers emotionally connect with your brand's food photography.

Don't miss out on an additional way to [boost your conversions](#) by running your social media contest advertising and scheduled times when your audience is most likely to engage with your email marketing or [SMS marketing](#).

via [GIPHY](#)

? Step #2: Update Your Restaurant Online Menu and Delivery App Menus

With contactless delivery, restaurant touchscreen menus, and QR restaurant menus now the standard for most restaurants, updating your online menu and delivery app menus can be done seamlessly. To ensure that you the restaurant ordering experience for new guests coming from your contest is standardized,

intuitive, and user-friendly customer experience you need to update your restaurant's online menus.

Optimize Delivery and Product Marketing With an Online Contest

Restaurant will also help to make it easier to track your customers restaurant ordering preferences so that you can use your social media contests to improve sales of specific products. Restaurant online menu platforms will allow you to connect to your delivery app menus so that your brand can make easier for restaurant locations to accept the orders and decrease fulfillment time.

Marketing Automation Keeps New Customers and Contest Participants Engaged

The delivery menu platform may also offer automated marketing campaigns that are designed to nurture first-time customers and engage existing guests. You can also have your contest participants opt-in to receive updates via SMS so that you'll always be able to reach them with restaurant advertising at meal times.

via [GIPHY](#)

? Step #3: Make Sure Your Restaurant Business Profiles Are on Major Local Directories

Don't make it hard for guests to order due to incorrect business contact information. Make sure that your restaurant appears on all major [local business](#) directories that are popular among customers in your area. By including your restaurant on these local directories, you'll increase your brand's reach, increase brand awareness, and reduce lost sales due to customer confusion.

via [GIPHY](#)

? Step #4: Update Your Restaurant Google My Business Profile

Google accounts for more than 43% of all local or location based searches. In addition, more than half of mobile searches are based on location or are local. This is why it's so important that your Google My Business (GMB) to contain accurate information about your restaurant before your online contest goes live.

Free Advertisement Maker with Templates

[Canva](#) lets you create eye-catching advertisements with their free ad maker. Customize your sweepstakes, contest, or raffle ads with trending images, fonts, and high quality design assets.

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ADVERTISEMENT

Local Queries Bring Customers and Participants to Your Restaurant Website

By optimizing your restaurant Google My Business profile, you'll give Google the information needed to suggest your restaurant as a suitable option for local queries. Your GMB listing will prove useful to your audience especially if you plan to use paid advertising, SMS marketing or in-app mobile ads to promote

your restaurant contest.

Use Contest Paid Advertising and Social Media Posting Timing

Not only will would-be guests see the fact that your restaurant ranks highly for their location search, the paid advertising for restaurant contests can increase sales and contest participants too. Schedule your paid advertising around meal times or the best time of day to post restaurant advertising for your brand. GMB provides the [social proof](#) that helps you to increase sales and maximize instant conversions from contest participant to new restaurant guest.

? Step #5: Add Your Business to Restaurant Reservation Apps to Attract Mobile Customers

With so many wanting to enjoy restaurants in-person after the COVID-19 pandemic, restaurants are eager to increase their table reservations. A contest can be a useful means of allows restaurant patrons to find out about your reservation RSVP options. A contest can bring new guests directly to your restaurant reservation app.

To avoid overbooking, if you plan to open your restaurant to reservations during your contest, make sure to plan accordingly. A sudden boost of viral sharing and brand awareness among your audience can bring in many contest participants and potential guests in a very short period of time.

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Restaurant Contest Checklist: Update Google My Business, restaurant reservation, ordering, menu item features

Make sure to update these restaurant contest checklist items on all business listings before your contest goes live:

- Address, phone number, driving directions, restaurant hours, restaurant website link, and restaurant photography both indoors and outdoors
- Description of cuisine and atmosphere
- Accepts reservations (Y/N)?
- Online delivery options available
- Direct link to your restaurant menu on your website
- Food photography photos and videos (match current offerings)
- Promotions available

Updating the prices on your online menu options will help you to test out different price points for customer orders, allowing you to leverage different audience segments with personalized guest loyalty program promotions.



? Respond to Restaurant Reviews Before Your Online Contest Goes Live

Get ready to launch your restaurant contest! Before your restaurant social media contest or sweepstakes goes live, make sure that you have responded to all restaurant reviews, including positive restaurant reviews, as well as, negative feedback. If a customer had a positive experience, don't hesitate to invite them to your enter your restaurant contest.

Use Restaurant Marketing Automation for Online Contests

It's helpful for restaurant marketers to use review response templates where appropriate to save time. However, recognize when a personalized response as needed. A personalized response with a promise to follow up is the best way to avoid turning a negative restaurant review into a PR disaster.

via [GIPHY](#)

Restaurant Reviews, Brand Reputation and Your Social Media Contest

When it comes to restaurants, everyone is a critic, so it's a good idea to carefully monitor the impact of customer reviews on your restaurant. A restaurant contest amplifies your reputation in the eyes of customers. So if you want their opinion of your restaurant contest and brand to be a good one, it starts by not ignoring your restaurant reviews.

Boost Holiday Ecommerce Sales With a Social Media Contest!



10 Online Contests Ideas for Restaurants: Try These Promos

Now that you understand what goes into restaurant social media contest planning, you can design your online contest using any number of ideas. What's more is that they are all highly effective for promoting a restaurant with a social media contest. Use these proven 10 contest ideas for restaurants to maximize your ROI.

Here are some unique restaurant social media contest ideas to use in your campaign:

via [GIPHY](#)

? Restaurant Contest Idea #1: Online Coupons and Discounts for Restaurant Contest Participants

You may have considered giving out coupons and discounts as a part of your online contest ideas for restaurant marketing plan. This is useful because you'll be able to track the discount performance by creating an offer specifically for your online contest participants.

Use the special offer as a way to excite restaurant social media participants instead of using it in your contest advertising. By doing it this way, you'll create an incentive for new participants to sign up as your promo will be spread by existing contest participants with their friends and colleagues.

? Restaurant Contest Idea #2: Food Holidays: Online Contest Ideas for Restaurants Year-around

Online contest ideas for restaurants are a great way to keep your promotional marketing unique and build customer loyalty. Fortunately food holidays are virtually endless, giving you many online contest ideas for restaurant that will keep your marketing promo calendar full.

via [GIPHY](#)

? Restaurant Contest Idea #3: Limited-time Offerings During Your Online Contest to Drive Foot Traffic

You can also consider releasing limited-time product offerings during your contest in order to increase foot traffic to your stores. For example, a social media contest idea for restaurants that can work well to help advertise your contest and brand at the same time is a freebie. Give away free food for your restaurants anniversary celebration and online contest.

? Restaurant Contest Idea #4: Use an Online Contest Ideas for Restaurants for Good

By partnering with a brand that promotes good causes, you can use an online contest idea for restaurants that is proven to increase your brand reputation. It also helps the organization that is your contest co-Sponsor by driving support for their cause and brand awareness.

? Restaurant Contest Idea #5: Bundle and Combo Offers

Don't miss out on increasing order value for your guests by creating bundle offers and combos and promoting them via contest advertising. You can use this online social media contest idea for restaurants in conjunction with an experience contest prize.

If portion size, mix and match offerings, and other customer preferences play a strong role in driving sales for your restaurant, bundles and combo offers as a part of your contest advertising can deliver ROI. Don't forget to advertise your contest on coupon websites to attract customers who may be interested in these limited-time offers.

via [GIPHY](#)

? Restaurant Contest Idea #6: Foodie Photo or Video Contest Ideas for Restaurants

Food ranks highly on the list for the most shared content on social media platforms like Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and TikTok. By asking your contest participants to create photos or videos for your brand, you can leverage the [user-generated content](#) (UGC) from this social contest idea for restaurants to increase brand awareness.

Here are a few photo and video contest ideas for restaurant examples:

- Choose our new flavor
- Name our new product
- How do you make your order contest

- Design a celebrity meal contest
- Choose the best variety of our product
- Free meal contest
- Free product voucher contest
- Voting restaurant online contest

To ensure participants create top-notch UGC to use in your marketing later, share your best food photography tips or video examples to your restaurant social media contest participants.

via [GIPHY](#)

? Restaurant Contest Idea #7: Co-sponsor a Social Media Contest for Your Restaurant With a Delivery Service

A social media contest featuring the delivery services your existing guests use and love can help to increase your online deliver orders. In addition to social media contest participants, savvy patrons will be sure to take advantage of any free delivery or discount offers that you provide to participants during your contest campaign.

via [GIPHY](#)

? Restaurant Contest Idea #8: Trivia Contest

An online trivia contest for your restaurant is a great way to get a flood of engagement has contest participants share tips for guessing the answers. With a trivia contest you can use it to educate new restaurant guests about your brand, highlight the new products or benefits of your restaurant for existing customers to get them to order again.

via [GIPHY](#)

? Restaurant Contest Idea #9: Popup Restaurant Contest Ideas

Customers love your restaurant and would jump at the chance to enjoy it for free at their own homes! Why not do a popup restaurant contest idea that will allow you to deliver an exciting at-home restaurant experience.

This restaurant contest idea can be done in several ways for the restaurant contest winners from [shipping](#) a meal delivery kit to the lucky winners, stopping by with a food truck, or having restaurant staff go to their homes to cater the event. You can do a backyard BBQ contest idea, catered holiday meal contest idea or dessert party idea as some examples of social media contest ideas for restaurants that will delight your contest winners.

via [GIPHY](#)

? Restaurant Contest Idea #10: Holiday Meal Help Online Contest Ideas for Restaurants ?

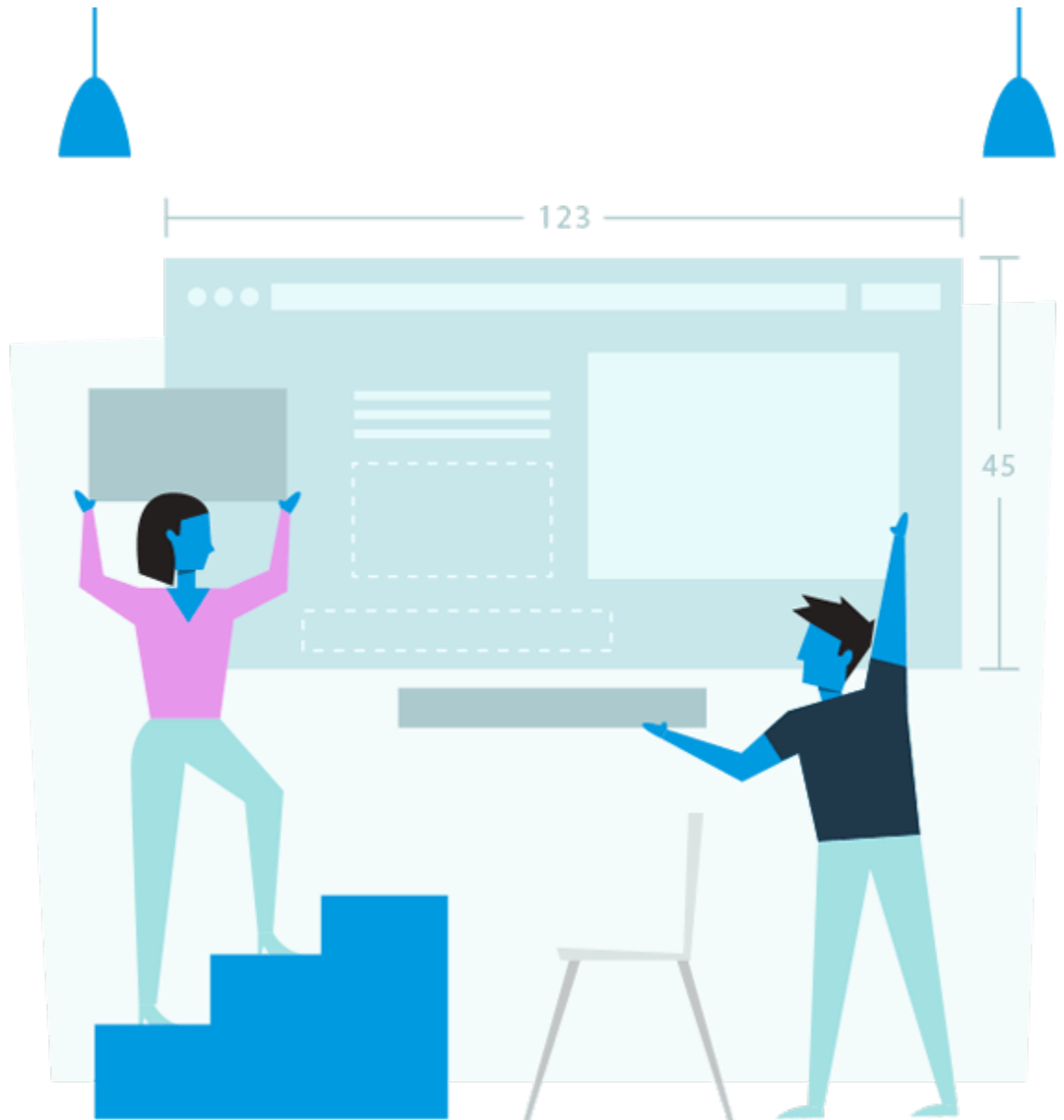
Christmas, Thanksgiving, and New Year holiday meal online contests for your restaurant can help you to increase delivery orders. At these times of the year, people are more likely to have guests over and need last minute holiday meal help.

Unsure about holiday meal social media contest ideas for restaurants that customers will love? Customers would love a chance for contest participants to win a fully-prepared holiday meal or a gift card voucher to

shop for ingredients from your brand along side their holiday meal.

Up Next: Plan Your Holiday Online Contest Ideas for Restaurants

The holidays will be here soon and now's the time to get started on your restaurant marketing so that you can increase sales and customer loyalty during high volume seasonal restaurant sales periods. These contest ideas for restaurants can help you get your contest marketing off to the right start.



Read these contest guides to get started:

? [Contest Management Services](#)

? [Contest Administration Overview](#)

? [What to Do After Your Contest Ends](#)

? [10 Legal Mistakes: UGC and Social Media Contests](#)

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