



PEPPERONI TIMES

The Pizzaiolo's Pepperoni - November 2016

PLAN FOR 2017
RICO'S PIZZA
BRIEFS
RECENT BLOGS

TIME TO MAKE A PLAN

EASY STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL 2017



The holidays are here – time to celebrate the year and to start planning ways to have more success in 2017. What we've discovered is that most restaurant operators have no problem celebrating, but it's much more difficult for them to plan the new year.

The biggest excuse why business owners and managers don't create a plan is they tell themselves they're too busy. This begs the question, are you running your business or is your business running you?

Management consultants say: What you measure you manage. Most restaurant owners measure sales, food cost, labor cost etc. The food business is generally a five percent profit industry, which means it doesn't take a lot of mistakes, waste or lack of attention to turn a profitable business into a loser. By having a plan to monitor every month, you'll be able to react much quicker.

Business plans, especially for start-ups, are complex. If you are running an established business, it's not that hard to put together a few key indicators as a model to measure the monthly activities:

REVENUE PROJECTION – Start by creating a simple spreadsheet with 52 columns and collect sales from the past two years. This gives you a basis of comparison.

Next, create a projection. Look at factors like weather and community events when selecting a revenue target. Then, add a row for comparison. At the end of each week, calculate the difference. As you do this step year after year, your projections will get better. Having an accurate forecast allows you to budget labor, marketing and capital improvements like new furniture or a POS system.

| Mike's on Main | | | | | |
|----------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| | * Jan Wk 1 | * Jan Wk 2 | *Jan Wk 3 | *Jan Wk 4 | Notes |
| Actual 2014 | 11,767 | 12,146 | 9,953 | 12,838 | * Week 3, big snow storm |
| Actual 2015 | 12,267 | 14,789 | 12,494 | 12,563 | * Week 2, local team in NFL playoff |
| Proj 2016 | 12,500 | 12,750 | 12,800 | 13,000 | |
| * + / - | | | | | |

NEW PRODUCT INTRODUCTIONS – Businesses growth is primarily attributed to launching new products, which starts with research and then a lot of testing.

This time of year, dozens of articles are written regarding food trends, consumer preferences, etc. For example, we have all seen the shift toward, healthy, all-natural, and fresh products. Look at your menu – have you added items that

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CUSTOMER PROFILE

AT RICO'S PIZZERIA, IT'S ALL ABOUT THE SERVICE...AND THE PEPPERONI, OF COURSE!



Love it or hate it, Yelp has it followers and every business can't get enough five-star reviews to boost their brand. Rico's Pizza, scattered around Sarasota, FL, doesn't seem to have that problem.

Check out a few comments from their satisfied customers:

"These guys make the best Stromboli I've ever had, cooked to perfection and served with some of the best sauce I've ever had! Being from Chicago I'm pretty picky about my pizza. Their pies are awesome too. Do yourself a favor and get a white pizza with artichoke and tomato."

"I love pizza but it's difficult to find any that are above average... until now! We tried an extra-large pizza with pepperoni and found the crust to be cooked perfectly with just the right amount of toppings and cheese. The flavor was outstanding and we will definitely get our pizza from here again and again."

Mark Riley, owner of Rico's, says great reviews are a product of great service as well as a menu honed over 17 years.

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RICO'S (Continued from page one)

"We are based near Siesta Key Beach, named year after year as the No. 1 beach in America. The competition is fierce as there are six pizzerias within two blocks of each other," says Mark. "I've watched them come and go but we are still here."



Mark says that every pizzeria can make fresh dough and grate its own cheese. "But what separates us is our positive and friendly attitude. Our employees set us apart. I have a manager who has worked for us for 16 years which is unheard of in this business."

Mark's family is also very involved. One of his sons is currently working in the restaurant and another is so gung-ho on the concept that

he is attending culinary school (the CIA) in Hyde Park, New York. "He calls me all the time to tell me we have created a New York-style pizzeria in Sarasota," says Mark with a laugh.

Rico's was started by Gregory Dentici and his brothers. Gregory's nickname is Rico so they went with that as the restaurant's name. Mark bought it in 1999 and began making changes. "They wouldn't go off script," he notes. "We cater more to our customers so if they want to change an item, we say fine. When things like kale became popular, we may not have it on the menu, but we have it in stock so we can serve it to customers who ask for it."

In Rico's case, it is the little things that count. Like choosing Liguria Pepperoni.

"It's simply perfect," says Mark. "I can't tell you how many people, many from other parts of the country who come here to visit, tell us that we have the pepperoni they grew up with and that they always look for."

Pepperoni is so popular that Mark is working on a Monster Pepperoni that will have three layers of Liguria pepperoni including a 3"-size mixed with regular size and loads of cheese.

Currently with six locations, Mark, Rico and his brothers are looking to expand and open 4-5 locations in the coming years. Looking ahead, Mark says, "I am really excited about my son's interest in our business and it makes me excited for the future."

That will give his customers plenty to Yelp about.

EASY STEPS (Continued from page one)

reflect new consumer choices? You don't have to completely re-write your menu, just add a few items in each category.



For example, an appetizer could be a new spicy sauce on the wings, Mozzarella sticks or bruschetta with fresh diced tomatoes and a drizzle of olive oil.

In the salad section create a new salad with micro-greens or organic lettuce. Feature an all-natural pepperoni pizza. Kids love pepperoni and parents want to encourage healthier eating habits. Lastly, add a fresh fruit plate for dessert, so delicious after a pizza or Italian dinner. Maybe even plop a small scoop of Gelato on top.

MARKETING IMPROVEMENTS – The new year is a great time to review your and the competition's marketing efforts. The eyeballs have shifted to online and mobile, so digital advertising and promotion will yield the best returns.

Make sure your website is up-to-date and get active (or more active) on Facebook. If you are not using social media, adding a Facebook page is easy to do. It takes less than an hour to set up a page, if you don't know how, ask a friend or one of your employees. Read more. Make a commitment to post twice a week. The posts can be promotions – "Tuesday is Two-fer Night", or something fun like, "Did you know American's eat 350 slices per second each day?" Make it fun and entertaining, and slip in a few sales offers in your posts.

TECHNOLOGY REVIEW – It was easier to run a restaurant 10 years ago, without the constant stream of technological breakthroughs. Operators are faced with many choices of tools including POS systems, online ordering, reservation systems like Open Table and marketing programs.

It's important to review the tools you currently use and evaluate their effectiveness. Only buy and use the technology that you need by separating the "must-haves" like online ordering and email marketing, from the "nice-to-haves" like tabletop tablets.

Technology has made our lives much easier but also much faster and frenetic. Multi-tasking is the norm now and we're all too busy. Taking some time to step back, review and plan for business success is not an option. Use the time between now and the first of January to create a plan for the new year.

LIGURIA FOODS WEBSITE: THE GO-TO SPOT FOR PEPPERONI

The Liguria website is the gateway to all things pepperoni. Check out all our product offerings, which include more than 25 types of pepperoni and a variety of pizza toppings and deli meats.

One of the more popular sections on the website is the “Find a Distributor” search tool, which allows pizza and deli operators to locate distributors in their area. There’s also an “Order Samples” section providing visitors the opportunity to request Liguria products.

Visit us at: www.liguriafoods.com.

PRODUCT SHOWCASE

THE PEPPERONI LOVERS PIZZA IS PEPPERONI PARADISE WITH THREE LIGURIA BRANDS

We are fascinated with all the new, creative pizzas appearing on menus across the country. There are wild combinations of toppings – have you tried a buffalo, kale and asiago cheese pizza? The fast-casual pizza locations can’t seem to come up with enough chef-driven pizzas on their menus.

Of course, at Liguria Foods, we’re all about pepperoni, which as most of you know is still the no. 1 pizza topping in America. We asked our chef recently to experiment with some new toppings and we want to share our favorite, The Pepperoni Lovers Pizza made with three of our favorite pepperoni brands:

1. **OUR FLAGSHIP LIGURIA 1974**
2. **THE SMOKY LIGURIA BRAVO GUSTO**
3. **THE SPICY LIGURIA ROSSO**

With so much delicious pepperoni completely covering the pie, every bite is a pepperoni lover’s delight. Give your customers what they’re craving: premium pepperoni that makes every pizza taste better. Here’s the recipe from our chef:

THE PEPPERONI LOVERS PIZZA

| | |
|--------|--------------------------|
| 1 | Pizza dough ball |
| 12 oz. | Tomato based pizza sauce |
| 16 oz. | Mozzarella cheese |
| 2 oz. | Liguria 1974 |
| 2 oz. | Bravo Gusto Pepperoni |
| 2 oz. | Liguria Rosso |

Prep: by weight mix together equal amounts of Liguria 1974, Liguria Bravo Gusto, and Liguria Rosso Pepperoni.

To assemble: stretch dough to 16-inch round, add pizza sauce, then Mozzarella. Top with three pepperoni, the coverage should be total, top to bottom and side to side. Bake, slice, and garnish with fresh Basil leaves.



RECENT BLOGS:

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HONORING NATIONAL PIZZA MONTH: A SLICE OF PIZZA HISTORY

While many Americans consider pizza a constant fixture of our country's cuisine, no one really takes time in between bites to ponder its origin or exactly how it rose to the top as our no. 1 comfort food.

Pizza, of course, hails from Italy, but there is much more to the story than it being miraculously created one day in a countryside villa. The popularity of pizza led to October being declared National Pizza month, so its founding and early history warrants a look back.

READ MORE: [HTTP://LIGURIAFOODS.COM/HONORING-NATIONAL-PIZZA-MONTH-SLICE-PIZZA-HISTORY/](http://LIGURIAFOODS.COM/HONORING-NATIONAL-PIZZA-MONTH-SLICE-PIZZA-HISTORY/)

PIZZERIAS TRENDING WITH TWITTER

Twitter is an undeniable asset when it comes to promoting your pizzeria. It provides the opportunity for restaurant operators to communicate in real time directly with their customer base.

Keeping up on trends is easy with Twitter's searchability. Simply use hashtags to find what's hot in the pizza business. For example, a search using the **#pizza** hashtag yields top results with pizzerias offering coupons and daily specials. The **#pizzatoppings** hashtag showcases discussions on a range of favorites from pineapple and mushrooms to pepperoni and sausage. The **#pizzasales** hashtag includes posts on sales figures including mention of the 5.2 billion servings of pizza Americans purchased last year.

(READ MORE: [HTTP://LIGURIAFOODS.COM/PIZZERIAS-TRENDING-TWITTER/](http://LIGURIAFOODS.COM/PIZZERIAS-TRENDING-TWITTER/))

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ABOUT US

Since our beginning in 1974, Liguria Foods has been dedicated to the foundation of recipe formulation. We painstakingly follow our old-world recipes, providing our customers (and your customers) with the same performance and flavor every day. We blend our traditional recipes and production processes (such as our redwood drying room) with state-of-the-art quality control and product distribution to ensure you're never disappointed, or have to worry about whether your customers have a consistent, enjoyable dining experience that keep them coming back.

For more than 40 years, we've been your partner, sharing your passion for the best tasting pepperoni and Italian meat products. If you already use our products, we thank you. If you aren't a customer yet, why aren't you? Take a minute to contact us to learn more about the Liguria difference, and what so many successful pizza storeowners already know.

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