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MojoBistro's Social Media Maître D': Preparing your Restaurant's Facebook Page for Graph Search

Posted by Kate Seiferth | 3/8/2013 | Category: Social Media

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So you have a Facebook page for your restaurant, now what? Once you search Facebook for all your restaurant locations and claim each page, the next step is to make sure all the information is up to date. More and more people are searching Facebook for their next dining option, and with the impending rollout of Graph Search, it is even more important for restaurants to claim local places, merge pages with places when relevant, and clean up information on Facebook.

Once you are certain that all the contact information, hours, and website links are correct on Facebook for your restaurant's page, the next step is building your fan base. Look for all places in your restaurant that are relevant to promote your Facebook page. Think menus, table tents, posters, coasters, etc. Add a link from your website so customers know to like you on Facebook, too.

Claiming your restaurant's Facebook page and garnering some fans is the easy part. Then, you must build a strategy for engaging with your fan base. Interacting with your fans is the key to success on Facebook.

Here are four ways to interact with your fan base on Facebook that will ultimately help optimize your restaurant's page for the launch of Graph Search:

1. **Encourage Check-Ins:** When customers check in at your restaurant on Facebook, a post goes on their wall and is broadcast to their friends. Most likely if they go to the trouble to post a check-in, they include a photo of what they ate as well. This is stellar and free promotion for your business. Encourage this type of checking in by posting reminders and offering manageable promotions for participants. A simple, "Show your server your check-in on Facebook and receive \$5 off your meal," is a great way to reward diners for their loyalty and promotion of your business. Once Graph Search rolls out user-wide, Facebook searches will customize depending on the individual searching and relevant to their network of friends based on "likes" and check-ins. The photos your diners take will also feature prominently in a Facebook Graph Search of your restaurant.

2. **Post Photos that Entice Fans to Share:** Posting photos of your food, cocktails, and venue are par for the course on Facebook. What you really want is to post photos so enticing that your fans will share your post and photo with their friends on their own Facebook walls. This is why it is extremely important to be strategic about the photos you post. Think out of the box and get an action shot of a chef making your most popular meal or a bartender shaking up your signature martini.

3. **Ask Questions:** What's for dinner? It could be as simple as that! Interaction is more than a one-way street. Every once in awhile you should talk to your Facebook fans and

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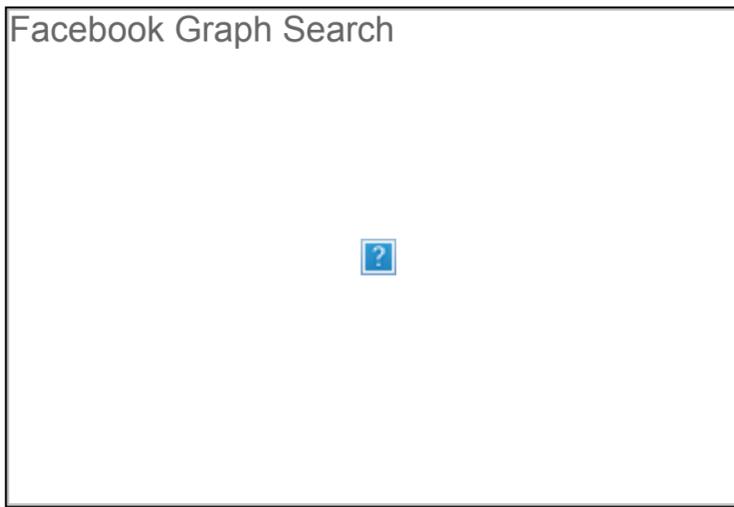
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find out what is going on with them. The best way to do this is to post questions on your wall specifically for diners. Ask for feedback on the current menu, ask for suggestions on new menu items, or even just ask what people think about current food trends. The more your fans interact with you, the more likely their friends will see your posts, too.



4. Post Relevant Information that is Not Just About You: A best practice on Facebook is to share information periodically that benefits your fans that is not just directly related to your business. Share fun food trends or local news to add value to your fans' timelines.

And if a Facebook fan posts on your wall, do not forget to respond and thank them! Use the same etiquette with customers online that you would in your restaurant.

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