



Rebooting Your Hospitality Business: **THE ESSENTIAL PLAYBOOK**

A guide to navigating the
'new normal' of COVID-19

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A NOTE FROM OUR CEO



These past few months have been an extraordinarily difficult and uncertain time for the hospitality industry. The onset of COVID-19 and subsequent lockdown measures forced restaurants, bars, cafés and hotels all over the world to close their doors. We understand the difficulties firsthand as many of these businesses are our customers.

The industry has taken a massive financial hit and there has been immense hardship for individual owners struggling to keep their businesses afloat. Staff have lost their jobs in vast numbers, almost overnight.

However, the resilience of the industry has been incredibly inspiring and positive. Many of our customers have made fast and effective adjustments to their operations, showing real determination in the face of adversity, not to mention plenty of business savvy.

‘Pivoting’ has been the order of the day, and some businesses have really nailed it. At Flipdish, we’ve been in the privileged position of being able to help, bringing online ordering to many who never had it before, enabling them to provide collection and delivery during the crisis.



Thankfully, the industry is now seeing some light at the end of the tunnel. The pandemic has not gone away and there are challenges ahead, but governments in many countries have started to relax social distancing and movement restrictions, largely opening up society and business activities again. Many hospitality businesses have already reopened their doors, with many more to follow worldwide over the coming weeks.

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With that said, in the new altered reality of COVID-19, it's not simply a matter of reopening the doors and going back to business as usual.

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Adjusting to the 'new normal' requires planning and work but it will be well worth the effort, as it will position businesses to bounce back quickly and strongly.

So to help out during this process, we've put together this Playbook on rebooting your hospitality business. I hope you find it useful and wish you every success in the next chapter of your business journey.

Conor McCarthy,
Flipdish CEO

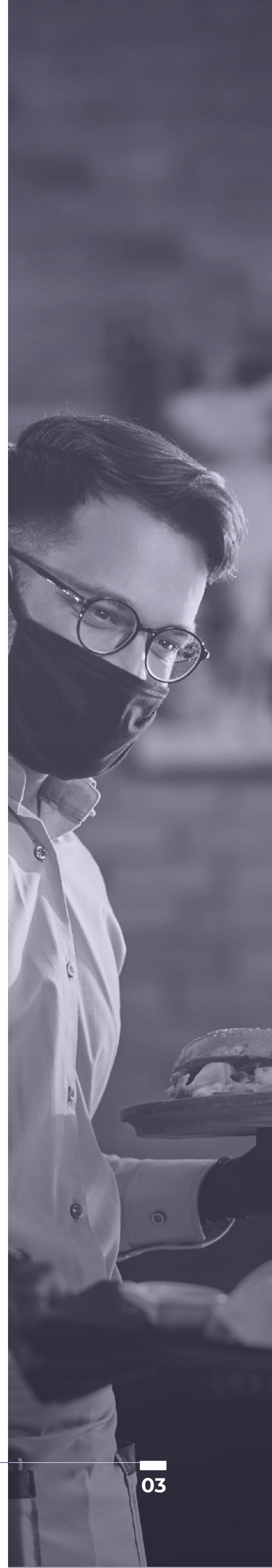
ADJUSTING TO THE NEW NORMAL:

Getting the Process Right

If you are a business owner or manager, you may already have reopened, or are preparing to reopen soon. You may have been running your business on a restricted basis during the lockdown, by providing pick-up and/or delivery.

Whatever your circumstances, there is plenty to be done to get the process right for the next stage and adjust to the 'new normal'. It's all about working through this smartly, focusing on the right priorities and tasks.

Ultimately, your goal is to get the business running profitably and efficiently again, generating strong sales, while adhering to the rules and guidelines pertaining to COVID-19.





In this Playbook, we highlight important practical steps to take for social distancing and hygiene when relaunching a dine-in service, plus marketing and communication tactics to re-engage customers.

It's important to concentrate on any mandatory requirements initially to ensure you meet health and safety standards required by governments. You'll fulfil your obligations while also instilling confidence and trust in your customers. Generating goodwill among customers will help to boost your brand now and into the future.

In addition, we'll share marketing and communication strategies to re-engage your customer base, boost your brand and drive future growth.

The steps in this Playbook provide a blueprint for growth and success in the future.

Of course, each country has different rules and restrictions, such as the exact distance required between customers within restaurants and pubs. Please check your local rules and guidelines.



Healthy Franchise **CHOPPED** **ADAPTS FOR** **REOPENING**



The healthy food QSR chain operates multiple outlets in Ireland and the UK. In mid-March, like so many others in the industry, Chopped had to close its outlets as government lockdown measures kicked in. However, during the crisis they delivered over 800 salads to frontline staff in Irish hospitals. So, despite the shuddering halt to business, they were able to help dedicated frontline workers.

They decided to reopen at some of their locations in Ireland when delivery and pre-order collection services were confirmed as safe to operate by the Irish government.

They gradually began to open up more and more of their stores during the lockdown period to provide delivery and collection, while following all health and safety measures and government guidelines on social distancing.

With customers able to order online through their Flipdish-powered website and app, the business steadily returned over a period of weeks. Major operational changes were needed, with less staff working, no dine-in service and a reduced menu. Customers have responded very well and returned in numbers. The business was severely disrupted and challenged by the onset of COVID-19 and the lockdown, but their strategic return to business has been very impressive.

FULFILLING SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES

While Maintaining Efficiency

Social distancing is key to stopping the spread of COVID-19 and critical in the environment of a dine-in restaurant, café or bar.

It's perhaps the most contentious and difficult part of reopening dine-in because of the challenges it presents for businesses that are trying to restore some sense of normalcy.

In some countries, ensuring there are two metres between customers is the guideline while others allow a shorter distance of 1.5 metres or one metre. Many businesses will have to reduce customer seating capacity in order to comply with social distancing requirements. Installing privacy screens between tables is another option. Both can complement each other if well planned.

For example, in the UK the social distancing rule is being reduced from two metres to 'one metre plus', in a move to help the hospitality sector get going again. Meanwhile in Ireland, restaurants and bars have been allowed to reopen since June 29. For pubs and bars, this is on the condition that they serve a substantial meal and time slots must be pre-booked for a maximum of 105 minutes.



Information will also be gathered for the purposes of contact tracing. Other countries in Europe and around the world have similar protocols in place, with variations on these procedures. So it's important to check and follow the exact rules in your own country.

Setting up additional outdoor tables or seating areas could help to increase capacity while adhering to new rules, subject to having the right licence of course. Make use of any available outdoor space and consider expanding customer outdoor seating to optimise your space.

Along with all of this, you should write and distribute staff guidelines on new social distancing measures and conduct staff training sessions on all procedures and working practices. Staff need to be informed and trained on all distancing guidelines.

Introducing contactless digital services can also help to ensure distancing compliance, while bringing greater efficiency to your operations.

Digital **self-service kiosks** and **table ordering** both help limit staff-customer interaction and contact.



Flipdish web ordering and mobile apps can be set up simply and quickly to offer a digital table ordering service in your restaurant, café, bar or hotel. This allows customers to order easily from their exact location without any direct staff contact. It can also be used to order from other specific locations if you do not have dine-in tables, such as hotel rooms and parking bays.





A Flipdish self-service kiosk in the hatch window of our customer Rocket's on Baggot Street in Dublin, Ireland

Self-service kiosks provide quick, convenient and contact-free ordering for both dine-in and takeaway options at your outlets. Introducing these to your business can complement and augment your existing processes, ensuring smoother reopening and improving the customer experience.

More broadly speaking, social distancing requirements are vital and fundamental to rebooting your business. Having the right measures in place will really help you to hit the ground running once you reopen your doors to customers.





Quick Recap:

YOUR SOCIAL DISTANCING CHECKLIST

- ☐ Rearrange or reduce customer seating to comply with social distancing mandates
- ☐ Install privacy screens between tables
- ☐ Introduce digital table ordering to limit interaction between staff and customers
- ☐ Set up outdoor tables or seating areas (subject to licence)
- ☐ Install digital kiosks for self-service to limit interaction between staff and customers
- ☐ Write and distribute staff guidelines on new social distancing measures
- ☐ Conduct staff training sessions for social distancing measures
- ☐ Offer online ordering on website or app (Delivery and/or Click & Collect) to limit interaction between staff and customers

ONLINE ORDERS A BIG HIT

for McMonagle's



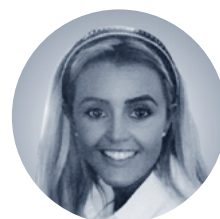
One UK business that moved swiftly to adapt their operations at the start of the coronavirus crisis is McMonagle's Boat, a popular fish and chip restaurant docked in the Forth and Clyde Canal in Scotland. During the lockdown, customers who went online to see if the restaurant was open were taken straight to its new website, powered by Flipdish, to order directly.



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Although we've shut the restaurant, takeaway deliveries are through the roof.

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— **Debbie Reilly,**
McMonagle's GM

Staying on Top of **HYGIENE & CLEANLINESS PROTOCOLS**

The next very important set of measures to put in place concern hygiene and cleanliness within your business premises. There should be largely a common sense approach to this, as control measures for coronavirus follow good food hygiene practices generally. Everyone should practice good hygiene and other measures to protect against the spread of infections.

In relation to food preparation, the World Health Organization (WHO) advises people to wash hands regularly, cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing, and to thoroughly cook meat and eggs. And as an added precaution, if you have suspected symptoms of respiratory illness you should avoid preparing food for other people and seek medical attention.

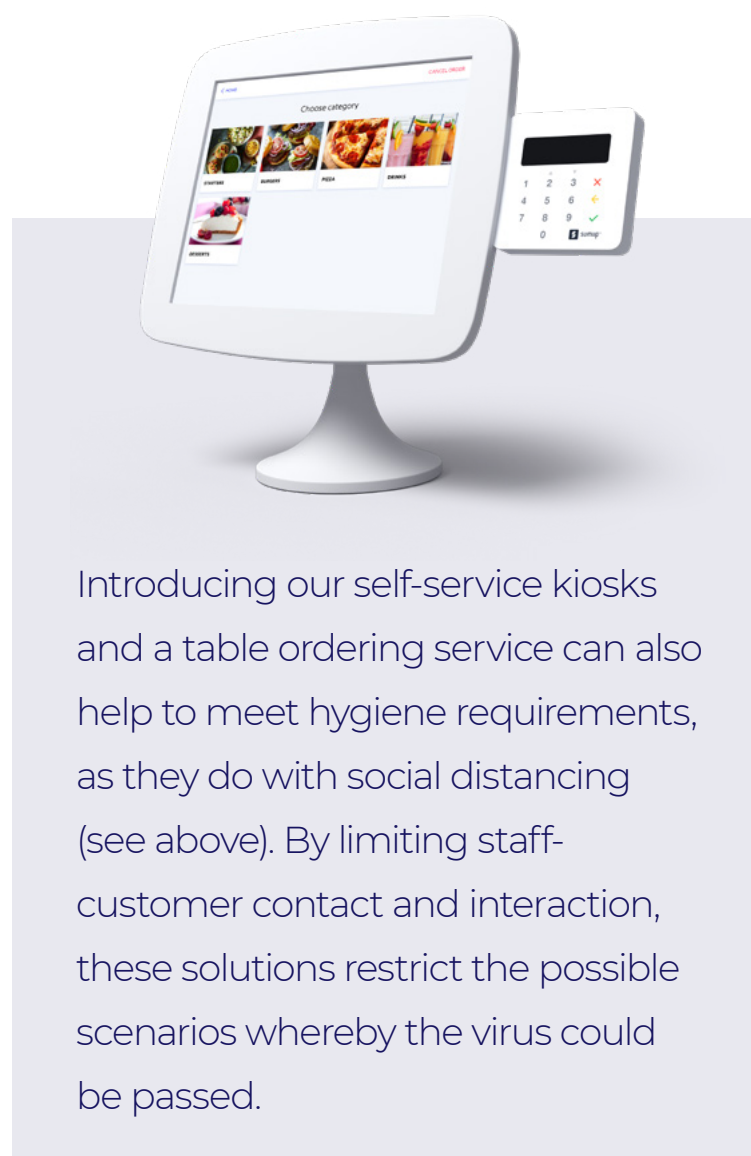
Business owners and managers need to lead the way on these measures. You need to ensure that staff are up-to-speed with the COVID-19 situation, are trained appropriately in food hygiene, and ensure effective supervision of staff.



Good hygiene facilities should be provided for staff to complement this. It's also advisable to review your menus to ensure all food can be prepared to comply with hygiene standards. You should write simple hygiene guidelines for staff to follow while at work and complete staff training sessions on these procedures. This should cover all the key points - regular hand washing, along with sneezing and coughing etiquette.

You also need to take precautions to ensure staff are not carrying the virus and are fit to work. This could involve daily staff temperature checks for symptom testing and accompanying procedures for staff showing symptoms to stop working.

Providing sufficient sanitary gloves and face masks for staff to wear on the premises is also important. Along with this, installing accessible hand sanitizer dispensers for customer and staff use will help them to keep on top of this aspect.



Introducing our self-service kiosks and a table ordering service can also help to meet hygiene requirements, as they do with social distancing (see above). By limiting staff-customer contact and interaction, these solutions restrict the possible scenarios whereby the virus could be passed.

While a lot of these measures are primarily concerned with hygiene standards for dine-in services, it's worth remembering that the very same precautions should be taken with food preparation for takeaway and delivery. Doing everything correctly around hygiene will not only ensure you're following the rules, it will also help to reinforce trust and confidence in your returning customers.



Quick Recap:

YOUR HYGIENE & CLEANLINESS CHECKLIST

- ☐ Write staff guidelines on hygiene protocol to follow at work
- ☐ Train staff on new hygiene measures
- ☐ Provide sufficient PPE equipment for staff (sanitary gloves and face masks)
- ☐ Install hand sanitizer dispensers on the premises for customers and staff to use
- ☐ Review menu to ensure food can be prepared in compliance with hygiene standards
- ☐ Introduce procedure for daily staff temperature checks for COVID-19 symptom testing
- ☐ Introduce procedure for staff with COVID-19 symptoms to stop working immediately

GOFIO:

Michelin Star restaurant creates exciting new online brand

GOFIO is a Michelin Star restaurant in Madrid, which had to close its doors in mid-March as COVID-19 hit the Spanish capital particularly hard. However, they quickly turned to Flipdish to create the new and exciting '*El Lagar x GOFIO*' online brand to change course and innovate the business.

With the challenge of maintaining its activity and continuing to provide service to loyal customers in exceptionally difficult circumstances, the online ordering solution met their needs. It has allowed them to bring their dining experience into customers' homes through both pick-up and delivery options.

On top of this, it opened up a new line of business which can continue well beyond the current crisis. It's a great example of a clever and creative pivot during a difficult time.

GOFIO's main reasons for choosing Flipdish for this task was the speed of implementation and its user-friendly system.

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We are surprised and delighted with the decision to bring our kitchen to the clients' homes. From the first steps until we had the entire operating platform, it took just four days. And in the first week of operation alone, we had half the turnover usual restaurant.

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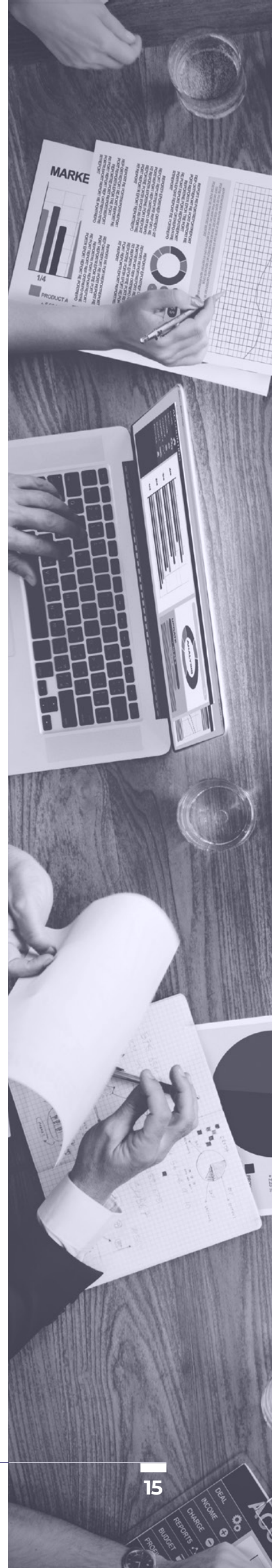
— **Safe Cruz,**
Chef & Co-founder
GOFIO Madrid

Building a Winning **MARKETING & COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

The marketing and communication activities are not so much about strictly following rules and guidelines (as with social distancing and hygiene), they are more about promoting your business as you enter this new post-lockdown phase. So they might be considered optional in a sense, but they are still crucial.

It may sound obvious but it's absolutely vital to let customers know your plans for reopening — you should clearly communicate this to them, including the all-important reopening date.

This can be done via your social media channels, customer emails or simple SMS campaigns containing essential information. You can choose to use text, image or video formats for any content or communications you put out. Whatever channels you choose, keep the messaging simple and to the point.



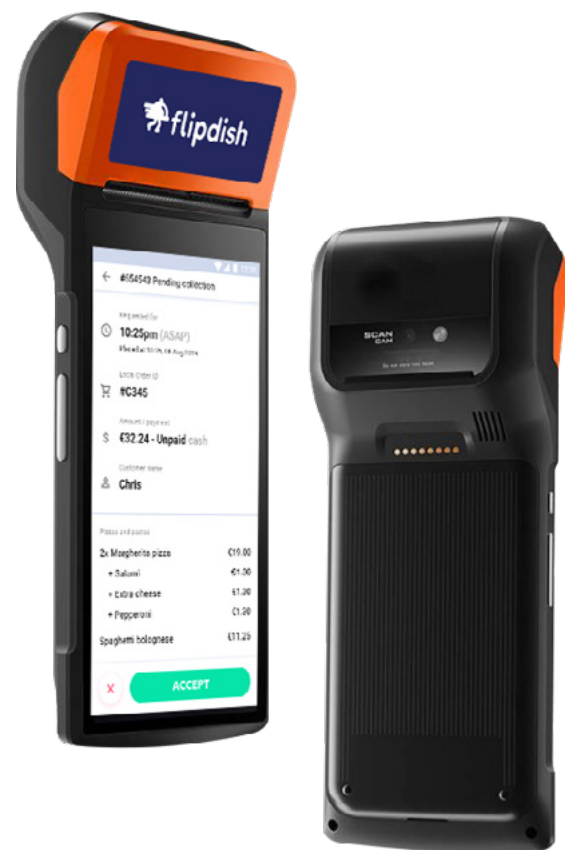
It's also advisable to promote your offering on these channels, covering all aspects of your dine-in and takeaway/pick-up services. You can roll out communications about reopening offers or promotions for customers, using all your usual online and offline channels. It's a good idea to use a variety and multitude of channels, rather than relying entirely on one area such as social media.

It could also be a good time to reintroduce some promotions which have proved popular in the past, as you can rely on them with some degree of confidence.

Continue these marketing and communication activities regularly, beyond the actual time of reopening, to build the momentum over the months ahead. You want to focus on customer loyalty and retention as it will be key to future success.

Hopefully your loyal customers will return en masse, but with things somewhat reset after months of lockdown, you can't assume all your customers will return. So you need to work on winning their business again. Look to build up engagement in the local community again through your communications.

In your promotional materials, you should try to tap into the pervasive mood, such as people's eagerness to meet and re-engage with relatives and friends in a social setting over food, drinks or coffee.



Remember that existing customer loyalty and your established brand are big factors in your favour, even at a local level. A recent online survey showed that the majority of takeaway customers (70%) would order directly, rather than through aggregator platforms, to help save their favourite restaurant from closure.

Flipdish's **managed marketing** services can also be very valuable in building up the customer loyalty aspect, growing customer reach and ultimately increasing orders. This covers social media options, highly targeted Google Ads, SMS marketing and email campaigns. These strategies and channels are proven to drive brand and sales, giving an excellent return on investment. It is worth considering at this stage, as it might help your business to hit the ground running and ensure future growth.



70%

**OF TAKEAWAY
CUSTOMERS**

WOULD ORDER **DIRECTLY**
TO HELP SAVE THEIR

**FAVOURITE
RESTAURANT**

FROM CLOSURE

And following on from the previous sections, you should communicate all new social distancing and hygiene measures to dine-in customers through on-premises printed materials, such as posters or on-table flyers. Again, the messaging here can be kept very minimal, just laying out some simple guidelines and procedures for customers to follow during the reopening phase. This can build confidence in customers, showing that you have all the right procedures in place to ensure a positive and safe environment for everyone who comes in.



Quick Recap:

YOUR MARKETING & COMMUNICATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Communicate reopening plans (including reopening date) via social media, email and SMS
- ☐ Promote via social media, email and SMS, covering all dine-in and takeaway/pick-up services
- ☐ Print and display on-premises posters and table flyers to communicate social distancing and hygiene measures to dine-in customers
- ☐ Let customers know about special reopening offers or deals via social media, email and SMS
- ☐ Plan regular marketing activities and communications to continue after reopening

AMY'S ICE CREAMS:

A quick pivot to pick-up and delivery

This premium US ice cream chain has a great established brand, well-known for its tasty and creative treats. It operates 15 outlets in Austin, Houston, and San Antonio, Texas. As the lockdown took hold in the US in mid-March, they quickly pivoted and ramped up curbside pick-up and delivery services, with the help of Flipdish.

Their Marketing Director Aaron Clay explained that they were well positioned to make the pivot, as they were already focusing on online ordering prior to COVID-19. *"We were in a very fortunate position, because we had already been working with Flipdish to start online ordering, as we knew that customer trends in general were moving that way,"* said Aaron.

Aaron explained that, using Flipdish products and features, Amy's were able to switch their focus away from dine-in and

catering to delivery and curbside pick-up. They already had the physical and human resources in place to roll this out, so the Flipdish-powered app gave them a platform to make sales.

They made their first deliveries just a couple of days from the beginning of the lockdown. Due to the high costs involved, they also began to move away from taking bookings through aggregators. Customers have been making the transition from these third-party apps to Amy's own branded app, as well as their website.

"We decided to pivot away from third-party delivery services because it takes 30% out of our total sales to do those delivery services and Flipdish is not even close to that expensive."



— **Aaron Clay,**
Marketing Director

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

By taking care of the basic requirements around social distancing and hygiene at the outset, you have your house in order and a solid base to work off. Through strategic marketing and communication, you can then focus on building sustainable success.

Digital ordering should be at the heart of your strategy as you adjust to the 'new normal', if it has not been already. It's important to be flexible, adaptable and open to new ideas.

In recent research, McKinsey **identified digital capability as a crucial factor** in the performance of restaurants during the coronavirus crisis.

It showed that the performance of a restaurant during the crisis depended largely on the following factors:

- Off-premises versus on-premises sales mix
- Reliance on day-part occasions
- Urbanicity
- Digital maturity
- Role of value



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A strong online ordering presence, digital loyalty programs, and robust customer relationship management (CRM) systems have been lifelines for restaurants during this crisis, as levels of digital engagement among consumers have soared.

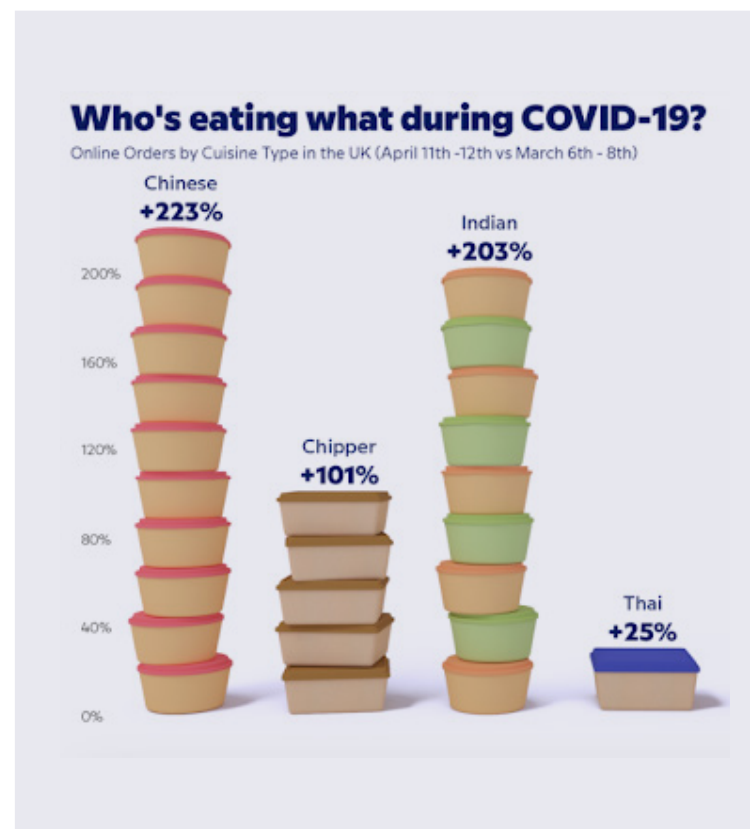
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— **McKinsey & Company**

Businesses that already had a high proportion of off-premises sales have been well positioned to cope and continue generating turnover during the crisis. Those with pre-existing online ordering systems were able to continue with pick-up and delivery operations when dine-in was taken out of the equation, ensuring they could continue making sales.

In fact, online orders have surged for several cuisine types during the lockdown period. Businesses which were positioned to provide these were able to continue doing business and make strong sales, even during the worst of the crisis.

Flipdish data shows that in the initial weeks of the crisis online orders in the UK surged across a variety of cuisine types with Chinese food up 223% and Indian up 203%.



The increase in online orders by cuisine type in the UK, during COVID-19

Digital capabilities and the capacity to pivot give hospitality businesses the flexibility and adaptability to survive a crisis of these proportions.

We've seen it firsthand with many staying afloat through quick and clever operational changes. This is true across a variety of business types from very traditional restaurants to luxury Michelin star establishments.

In the ‘*new normal*’, digital solutions can no longer be seen as optional extras for any business. Those that have embraced online ordering are proving to be well positioned in this environment.

You don’t need to wholly abandon the existing business model or values on which the business has grown. You can complement old and new practices for an overall winning strategy.

For example, you can put online ordering, pick-up and delivery options in place running side-by-side with the return of your dine-in service. Through Flipdish delivery partners, you can integrate a ‘last mile’ delivery service with our online ordering system, providing a straightforward end-to-end service and customer experience. You can have the best of both worlds, while optimising the most profitable areas.

You can use digital table ordering and self-service kiosks to augment and improve your dine-in service, while maintaining the traditional restaurant or café experience which many customers value.

At Flipdish, we advocate taking a multi-faceted approach to increase sales overall and future proof your businesses against any other shocks.

As we mentioned in the marketing and communication section, it’s also important to focus on building your own brand, along with customer loyalty. Having your own white-label online ordering system allows you to do this, rather than relying on aggregator platforms.

Apart from the high fees they charge, aggregators can diminish your brand over time, when you should be building it. You want to maintain control of your brand and reputation as you grow and enhance digital capabilities.

While COVID-19 has been, and remains, an unwelcome development for the hospitality sector, you have an opportunity to reboot your business. We hope that with our Playbook you have some practical advice for success and a solid strategic framework for the long-term.



Flipdish is easy to set up and use, with all your digital ordering needs covered, including click & collect, delivery and in-store dining options. Website ordering, mobile apps, digital self-service kiosks and table ordering are all integrated into a single online ordering system.

Flipdish is a proven and reliable partner, facilitating millions of orders globally, making it the perfect online ordering solution.