

twitter for restaurants

By Jim DeMicco

Last month, the social networking, micro-blogging phenomenon Twitter received \$48 million in free advertising from the mainstream media. That means that despite its silly name, Twitter is here to stay.

You might want to seriously consider getting aboard the Twitter bandwagon to reap some of the rewards. Twitter is an excellent tool to reach out to your “fans” in real time about drink specials, menu changes, karaoke night, coupons, or just about anything you can think of. I read about a bakery in London that actually sends out tweets every time their freshly baked bread or muffins come out of the oven.

The best thing about Twitter is that it’s completely free to use – and so easy to set up. Now how to get those followers...

1. Follow others. Twitter experts say that up to 50% of those you follow will follow you back. You can search by geographic region and follow all the tweets you see in a 25 mile radius of your location. You can also search using the email addresses from your eNewsletter list (this process is a bit convoluted and the easiest way is probably to input the names into your Gmail address book first). You can also just search for people that tweet about eating out and how much they love food.

2. write interesting and timely tweets.

When Michael Jackson passed away last month, Twitter literally exploded with personal MJ tributes. It was the number one trending topic for days and many fans spent

hours reading the tweets of others. That would have been an excellent day to announce an MJ tribute karaoke night at your restaurant.

3. promote your twitter name everywhere

(mine is @jhdemicco btw). Promote your twitter account on your menus, website, eNewsletter, and print, radio and TV ads. At least until the Twitter craze ends, promoting your Twitter account is just as much about showing that you are on the cutting edge as it is about getting new followers.

4. run a contest.

Maybe you can give away a dinner for two to a randomly chosen follower as soon as you reach 1,000 tweeps. Once you have enough followers you can start having some fun. What about twittering a secret phrase good only for 15 minutes to claim a free drink at the bar? If your patrons are mobile twittering at their booths, you’ll get a good laugh when they step up to the bar and announce “I’m too sexy for this drink.”

Jim DeMicco (jd@skycline.com) is the director of marketing and web designer for Skye Communication, LLC (www.skycline.com), a Connecticut-based firm specializing in grass roots e-marketing, public relations, web design, and promotions for businesses and individuals across the U.S. (203) 879-2258.



mfn tweeps to follow:

@mymfn (My Foodservice News): NewsTrade Magazine for independent restauranteurs, chefs, and food lovers alike!

@Skye_Elissa (Skye MacBroom): Business Owner, Publicist, Writer, Marketing.

@jhdemicco (Jim DeMicco): Business Owner, Web Designer, eMarketing, Promotions.